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ABSTRACT

A discussion of language proficiency in college-level African language programs begins with a review of the literature in the broader field of foreign language learning concerning notions of language competence, proficiency, and proficiency goals. This section examines linguistic competence, communicative competence, communicative syllabus design, levels of proficiency, proficiency guidelines and scales in general, and specifically, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages guidelines. The need for proficiency goals in African language programs is discussed in general, and the related issues of materials development, instructor qualifications, student needs, course articulation, and testing are discussed in particular. Specific proficiency guidelines for Hausa, Lingala, and Swahili are also presented. A list of references and an Indiana University questionnaire on student goals in learning an African language are included. (MSE)

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PROFICIENCY GOALS IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES WITH SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HAUSA, LINGALA, AND SWAHILI

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FINAL REPORT: Re-evaluation of Indiana University's
African Language Program Goals and Objectives, Year I

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PROFICIENCY GOALS IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES WITH SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HAUSA, LINGALA, AND SWAHILI

Rozana Ma Newman

1. Introduction

The teaching of African languages in the U.S. has made great strides since 1960 when the first national conference to convene African linguists and language teachers took place (Bordie 1980). Since then, African language programs have become an integral component of the nine federally funded African Studies area programs. Public awareness of the position of these languages in liberal arts curricula has been steadily growing. In the MLA-ACLS Language Task Forces report on the uncommonly taught languages (Brod 1980), African languages earned their rightful place alongside some of the better known foreign languages considered to be of vital importance to U.S. national interests.

Within the field of African language (henceforth AL) instruction, two recent conferences sponsored by Michigan State University, in 1979 and 1984, have done much to promote a real sense of community and consensus. The 1979 conference tackled the problem of providing an inventory of African languages in terms of priority categories and it outlined some underlying principles to be followed in developing basic instructional materials for the highest priority languages (Wiley & Dywer 1980). The 1984 conference was devoted to forging specific guidelines for materials development, considered to be the single most pressing problem facing the field (Dwyer & Wiley forthcoming). The vitality of African language (henceforth AL) training programs is further attested by the intensive summer language programs held at the various African Studies area centers and in the recently instituted advanced study abroad programs for Swahili and Hausa. Intellectual support for the study of African languages in general continues to be provided by the annual African linguistics conferences hosted by various institutions in the U.S. and Canada.

While the field of AL instruction thus appears to be in a state of healthy development, success in producing students with good practical competence in

these languages is still elusive. Much more remains to be done if such programs are to truly progress towards fulfilling their dual mission--a humanistic concern to educate students about the diverse languages, cultures, and value systems of Africa, and a professional commitment to provide high quality training to prospective researchers working in Africa.

One aspect of the problem is due to the rather unique position AL programs have within the structure of the university, as compared to typical foreign language (henceforth FL) departments such as French, Germanic, or Slavic languages. Only two U.S. universities have autonomous departments of African languages and literature offering degree programs. The more usual case is for African languages to be offered within the curricula of a linguistics department which provides them as "service" courses for the African Studies area program of the university. Linguistics departments are not normally concerned with practical language courses, so that language teaching is viewed as a less highly valued activity than pure linguistic research. This attitude has concomitant effects on the time commitments of the AL faculty and on the quality of the language programs as a whole.

Another aspect concerns the rather ambivalent attitudes of African area specialists, who are the immediate beneficiaries of these programs. On the one hand, they vigorously assert that the language program is the core component of the area studies program. Yet in their own research, for a variety of entirely valid reasons, they continue to carry out much of their fieldwork in the transnational languages (English, French, Arabic) or resort to the use of interpreters and translators. The result is that language proficient faculty who could serve as role models for African area students are still generally lacking. The problem is cyclical: too often the language component of area studies programs--not just African--has a negative image or is underrated by members of the other area disciplines precisely because of the language profession's failure to do what it claims to do, establish language proficiency in its students (Twarog 1980:67).

This failure, familiarly known as "the foreign language crisis" (Simon 1980) is broadly acknowledged in the profession. Teachers of African languages, no less than of European or East Asian languages, can readily identify with the following statement:

As teachers we are forced to admit that our efforts at making students learn a foreign language have not exactly been a spectacular success. Again and again, we have had to ask ourselves: why is it so hard to learn a foreign language? How is it that under

certain circumstances, a second and even a third language is learned without teaching and seemingly without much effort, while in other circumstances, more specifically in a school or university setting, and with the best of wills, foreign language learning is frequently abandoned in anger and frustration or is altogether ignored or avoided? (Stern & Cummins 1980:296).

To combat this failure, much important research in the foreign language has been conducted in the past two decades. The results are some bold new theories of second language acquisition and more flexible methodologies which offer greater promise for success over the older paradigms. These new findings are no less crucial or relevant to what goes on in the average AL classroom, yet they are not generally known to teachers of these languages. In some ways, AL instructional programs seem not to have advanced beyond Welmer's tongue-in-cheek characterization: "If a teacher and a student sitting on a log make a school, then it may almost be said that a descriptive linguist and an informant sitting at a desk make an African language classroom" (Welmers 1960:10). Many an AL course is still "put together" on an ad hoc basis, with improvised materials, insufficient contact hours, outdated teaching methods, undertrained or undersupervised native-speaking instructors, vague notions of course evaluation and testing, and an overall lack of program objectives beyond the necessary level designations such as "beginning" or "advanced". While problems such as lack of teaching and reference materials will remain crucial ones for a long time, other aspects relating to the quality of our programs need to be critically examined and improvements attempted. The future of our programs depends upon acknowledging greater accountability for the present situation.

This report is addressed to one of the most widely discussed issues in the teaching of foreign languages today, that of language proficiency. Section 2 reviews the literature in the broader field of foreign language learning concerning notions of language competence, proficiency, and proficiency goals. In Section 3, we discuss the need for proficiency goals in AL programs generally. Finally, Section 4 contains specific proficiency guidelines which we have drawn up for Hausa, Lingala, and Swahili, three of the regularly scheduled African languages taught at Indiana University.

2. Notions of Competence and Proficiency in Foreign Language Learning

2.1. Linguistic Competence

The term "competence" has meant various things at various times in the field of FL teaching and theory. In the 1960s when the structuralist-behaviorist theory of language was still dominant and most language textbooks, including the Foreign Service Institute manuals for African languages, used audiolingual methods, "competence" generally meant "linguistic competence", i.e. mastery of the basic linguistic elements and levels of structures of the language (phonology including tone, morphology, syntax, and lexicon). The way to achieve this mastery was through a strict insistence on the formation of habits as practiced in rapid pattern drills (repetition, substitution, transformation, backward buildup), dialogue memorization, and a gradual progression from linguistically simple to more complex structures. Students were expected to perform well on all language skills, not just speaking, but particular attention was paid to phonetic accuracy and reinforced by rigorous work in the language laboratory. Spontaneous use of the language was discouraged in early learning stages lest "bad habits" set in. Such a theory of language learning precluded any realistic communicative use of the language from taking place until *after* a solid linguistic base was established. In other words, linguistic competence was supposed to lead "naturally" to a practical ability in the language. However, such practice was usually deferred; many students never actually reached advanced enough levels to use the language for any communication approaching real-life situations. As for attempts to make lesson materials more realistic, these were successful only to the extent that the dialogues "occurred" in familiar every-day situations (shopping at the market, being sick in the hospital). But as Valdman has pointed out (1980:19), these dialogues were mainly pretexts for "seeding" specific grammatical points and frequently ended up by being "stagey", inauthentic texts. In other words, these situational syllabuses were not really different from purely grammatical syllabuses, as the emphasis still remained on the presentation and learning of the language through its linguistic structures.

2.2. Communicative Competence

In the early 1970s, with the increasing evidence that structuralist theories and methodologies were failing to produce their hoped-for results, FL educators began to question and reassess their objectives. While linguistic competence as previously defined was a necessary objective, was it the primary one? Surely people studied languages for the eventual purpose of using them to interact in real-life settings with speakers of the target language. To strive for linguistic accuracy apart from the social context of language use was certainly useful as an exercise but it did not represent *real* language use. Inspired by the work of sociolinguists such as Dell Hymes, innovators like Savignon (1972, 1983) helped introduce Hymes' notion of "communicative competence" (as contrasted with "linguistic competence") into the FL classroom. For her, the goals of language teaching were to develop in students as early as possible a functional ability to use the language. As she summarizes it, language use is creative and learners use whatever linguistic knowledge they may have at their disposal to express, negotiate, and interpret meaning (1983:23-4). Formal accuracy in beginning stages of learning should neither be expected nor required. Classroom activities are learner-centered and often learner-initiated, and materials should be developed with learner needs in mind. Within her broad framework of communicative competence (1983:34-43), linguistic competence is but one of four components, alongside sociolinguistic competence (knowing the rules of social appropriateness of utterances), discourse competence (interpreting interrelated chunks of meaning, not simply isolated utterances), and strategic competence (having available verbal and non-verbal coping/survival strategies which can be called upon to compensate for imperfect linguistic knowledge). Finally, communicative competence is only acquired through communicating: "One develops skills by *using* skills" (Savignon 1983:30, italics hers).

The recent work of theorists in second language acquisition such as Krashen (1980, 1982) also point to communication as the matrix in which true language acquisition (as distinct from conscious learning) develops. According to Krashen's model, it is the constant exposure to "comprehensible, authentic input" always slightly beyond's one's present level of competence that contributes to successful acquisition of the language. For him, however, speaking is not as central a requirement as listening: "...acquirers profit not from what they say but from what the native speaker says" (1980:67). Moreover, reading for pleasure can serve equally well as the essential requirement for input that is comprehensible.

2.2.1. Communicative Syllabuses

The implications of communicative models of language learning for the classroom are far-reaching. If communication is the goal at even the earliest stages of instruction, then course syllabi and teaching materials have to be radically revised, students' interim grammars ("interlanguages") respected instead of dismissed as asystematic learner errors, and learner variables relating to individuals' communicative abilities investigated (Stern & Cummins 1980). For our purposes, we need only touch on some of the implications for the design of syllabuses.

Some FL researchers have felt that the "functional/notional" syllabus design developed in Europe by the Council of Europe (Trim et al. 1980) in England by Wilkins (1976) hold great promise for fulfilling the demands to incorporate communicative language learning into the classroom. In a functional/notional syllabus, two concepts determine what to teach: a) "notions" or meanings that people need to express, and b) "functions" or acts that they want to accomplish by what they say. Instead of teaching learners *what* the grammar and vocabulary for, say, the notion "advice", as in sentences such as "he gave them some good advice, he advised them of their options", it would be just as useful for them to *know how* to give that advice, how to advise someone in the language, since giving advice is among the many functions for which we use language (Harlow, Smith & Garfinkel 1980). The content of such courses would thus center around such notions as how to give instructions, express happiness, complain about something or someone, ask for directions, etc., notions that we all need to be able to express in order to function in our daily lives regardless of any particular social situation. In many respects, the popular tourist phrasebooks are based on just such a model. This approach is pragmatic and appealing and would certainly lead us toward fulfilling our responsibility for preparing our students to "get along" in the target language. But as Guntermann points out (1980:10), its application raises difficult questions. How does one select and order the functions to be learned? Is there any relationship between specific language functions and specific linguistic structures? How well should we be able to predict a person's future communicative needs?

Higgs and Clifford (1982) point out that the functions and skills needed for ordinary survival situations are surely less complex than those needed for more highly specialized situations (e.g. negotiating an international business contract) and that degrees of linguistic complexity and ranges of context need to be

accounted for at various levels in such a model. Wilkins (1976:59) and Valdman (1980) suggest that the solution lies in a cyclical approach such that notions and functions presented in early stages should be as grammatically simple as possible (even allowing for "pidginized" varieties) while remaining authentic and communicative. At higher levels, the same notions and functions can be reintroduced, but with a broader range of expressiveness and increased subtlety in meaning according to the specific situation. Although few FL textbooks, apart from some English as a Second Language ones, have yet to be designed in which functions and notions form the organizing principle for presenting course content, suggestions have been offered as to how to incorporate more functional practice into the classroom setting (e.g. Guntermann 1981; Littlewood 1981; Valdman 1981).

2.3. Proficiency

Concurrent with the concern for defining what language competence means has been an equally great concern for evaluating and testing that competence. As Jones puts it, "...there is probably no other academic field so heavily involved in testing [as the foreign language field]" (1981:43). Among language testers, the term "proficiency" is not just another general term for "competence" but has come to be used in a specialized technical sense. An early distinction in theories of language testing was made by Clark (1972) between tests which measure "achievement" and those which measure "proficiency". Achievement tests measure what the student has or hasn't mastered in terms of the finite language structures presented in class and broad language skills (e.g. speaking as contrasted with reading). Proficiency tests, on the other hand, measure what the student can do in the language. They attempt to "certify the acquisition of real-life competencies" where real-life refers to "any use of the language which takes place outside of the course setting and which has a generally accepted pragmatic value" (Clark 1972:5).

In the traditional FL classroom, most tests are of the achievement type where test items are discrete point items chosen from the material covered in the course. Such tests enable the teacher to diagnose features that have or haven't been learned and provide a measure for objective-type grading. The trend away from such tests comes with the realization that tests which measure linguistic accuracy do not necessarily measure, directly or otherwise, a person's ability to use the language functionally in new and novel real-life situations. As the

emphasis on communicative language objectives increases, so must instruments for measuring achievement of those objectives evolve into more proficiency oriented ones (Omaggio 1983). In fact, Savignon suggests that the distinction between "achievement" and "proficiency" will disappear as more and more teachers come to view the goal of FL learning as the development of functional language skills: "Language proficiency *is* communicative competence and should be defined and evaluated as such" (1983:245, italics hers).

2.3.1. Levels of Language Proficiency

The move toward a consensus on functional language proficiency as the overriding objective of FL instruction has been paralleled by the need to define "levels" of proficiency. It is no longer sufficient to label a student as "beginning" or "advanced" merely because he has spent a amount of time studying the language. Such labels are virtually meaningless, given the wide range of courses actually taught under such labels. We must be more precise about his ability: how much language does he know at any given point in time (in or out of the classroom setting) and what tasks can he accomplish with it? Language learning presumably occurs along a continuum progressing from level to level. It should be possible to identify these levels of progression and to establish learning goals which reflect them. The priorities statement on evaluation issued by the National Conference on Professional Priorities held in Boston (ACTFL 1980:54) summarizes this: "Establish realistic language learning goals by stages of achievement and synthesizing linguistic, communicative and sociolinguistic aspects". Similarly, the MLA-ACLS Task Force on the less commonly taught languages has recommended that highest priority be given to "the development of an outline of realistic goals by stage of achievement...[as] *the basis for all future efforts* to promote and develop [these languages]" (Brod 1980:26, italics ours). For the uncommonly taught languages such as African languages, this means that establishing proficiency goals takes precedence even over such vitally critical areas as materials development and teacher training. It is only when we have a clear idea of what our overall goals for our students are that we can begin to organize our resources in order to provide the kind of textbooks, syllabuses, and trained personnel necessary for implementing those goals. In the broadest sense, then, proficiency goals are paramount. As Clifford (1980:40) puts it:

A lack of specific objectives or output goals is the greatest stumbling block in foreign language program evaluation. Although the profession gives lip service to developing

usable communication skills, it has yet to precisely define what that means in terms of functional language ability. Our professed goal of teaching functional language skills is, in general, not reflected in our curriculum, in our instructional activities, or in our tests and reporting measures. We promise the students functional ability in a foreign language and then provide insufficient time to acquire those skills. We use inappropriate instructional techniques, and do not test communicative skills. Both within and without the profession we continue to state requirements and levels of achievement in time units rather than proficiency levels. For our students, and for the public in general, our actions speak louder than our words.

Before turning to the question of the design of suitable proficiency goals, we should clarify that a distinction can be made between proficiency as a desired outcome and performance as an actual fact. "Proficiency goals" are an abstract set of standards which the learner *aims for* in learning any language. "Performance levels" are what he actually *does* after a period of instruction. It is by his performance, his behavior, that we determine whether he achieves or falls short of the standards set, at whatever level. Stern and Cummins (1980:204-5) give an instructive example of this distinction in the area of pronunciation, using 4 levels:

- [1] often intelligible
- [2] usually foreign but rarely unintelligible
- [3-4] sometimes foreign but always intelligible
- [5] native

They correctly point out that such a scale is fine for describing restricted language performance but it could hardly serve as a statement of general objectives in teaching pronunciation. Proficiency goals must be expressed in terms of "what one would wish the learner to be able to do" (1980:205). They must be stated positively in terms of *targets* of competence, not negatively in terms of incompetent or imperfect performance. While statements of proficiency goals are often expressed in terms of "levels", it is important to keep in mind that they are projections of abilities, not to be confused with actual performance.

2.4. Proficiency Guidelines and Scales

Within the past decade or more, a number of important projects to develop proficiency-based learning goals have been carried out. The ambitious Modern Languages Project of the Council of Europe, as summarized in van Ek and Trim (1984), sought to develop a comprehensive framework for teaching adult learners

which could be used by all the Common Market countries. They were not so much interested in defining overall objectives—and therefore rejected proposals such as Wilkins' seven-level definitions of proficiency (Trim 1978:66–71)—as in the development of a functionally oriented syllabus for teaching toward a "threshold level proficiency", a level which they considered the minimal level below which an adult learner could not adequately function on his own in the target language environment. One of the most significant features of their syllabus model was the consistent, principled subordination of the linguistic form to the social function of language:

Like some earlier objectives, *The Threshold Level* contains lists of words and grammatical structures that are recommended for acquisition by the learners in order to be able to function in the foreign language in the way specified elsewhere in the objective. It differs from earlier objectives, however, in that the selection of language forms (words and grammatical structures) is fully related to and directly derived from behavioural specifications. In other words, *The Threshold Level* is a detailed specification of what the learners will be able to do in the foreign language, with, in addition, recommendations as to which words and grammatical structures may most economically enable them to do what is specified in the main (behavioural) part of the objective (van Ek 1984:79).

In the U.S., the history of proficiency-based projects is thoroughly presented in Liskin-Gasparro (1984). Briefly, proficiency rating scales were first developed and used in the 1950s by the language school of the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in reponse to the U.S. government's need to classify the level of language skills of its employees. Scales were developed for speaking, listening, reading, and writing, where each scale comprised six levels each ranging from, e.g. an S-0 of "no practical speaking proficiency" to an S-5 of "speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker". The ratings were said to be "absolute" in the sense that the ultimate criterion was "the knowledge and ability of an educated native speaker". Later, these scales came to be used for testing and evaluation by other government agencies needing to test prospective employees for language-essential positions. Due to its widened use, the original six-point (0 through 5) FSI scales were subsequently expanded into eleven-point scales (by adding plusses to all levels up to 5), which have since become known as the ILR (Interagency Language Roundtable) scales. The testing instrument itself is an oral interview, modelled closely on the original FSI Oral Interview Test (Wilds 1975). From the outset, the original FSI scales and their various

expanded versions were described in terms of semantic notions and language functions (e.g. can order a meal, ask simple street directions, write a letter requesting lodging, handle casual conversations about current events) over and above the specification of degrees of grammatical control and fluency in the four skills. This functional emphasis was fundamental since the scales were used for predicting a person's relative ability to function in the target culture for specifiable tasks at specifiable levels.

2.5. ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines

The expansion of the use of the ILR scales outside of the government came in the 1960s and 1970s when the Educational Testing Service (ETS) was asked to take over large-scale testing of Peace Corps volunteers. At the same time, the FSI approached the academic community to find out whether it might be interested in the FSI system (i.e. the rating scales and the oral interview). Given the language profession's new emphasis on communicative, functional objectives, it was only natural that the FSI's work found enthusiastic support. The mood was clearly one of establishing nationally recognized and used standards to bolster the uneven quality of secondary school and college programs and to lead the way toward proficiency objectives. The only question was one of adapting the ILR scales to make them more suitable for school settings. The various interests of the FSI, ETS, the MLA-ACLS Language Task Forces Project (Brod 1980) and the report of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (1979) all converged at the end of the 1970s to set the stage for the eventual appearance of the Provisional Proficiency Guidelines issued by the Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL 1982). In addition to a set of "generic" guidelines, specific guidelines have been published for English, French, German and Spanish, and projects are under way to develop them for Arabic, Russian, Chinese, and Japanese. The ACTFL guidelines are modelled on the ILR rating scales except that the lower levels 0 and 1 have been expanded and relabelled to show greater sensitivity to the levels which can be realistically attained by students in a two to three year academic program. Similarly, the higher end of the ILR scales from Level 3 and above correspond to an undifferentiated "superior" level in the ACTFL academic scales, in recognition of the fact that these higher levels are simply inapplicable to the school setting due either to time constraints or the lack of teachers sufficiently proficient at these higher levels.

The ACTFL guidelines, just like the ILR ratings, are based on three "factors of proficiency" (Liskin-Gasparro 1984:35-37). Each of the language skills for each level includes statements about the *functions* (tasks accomplished, attitudes expressed), the *content* (topics and subject areas, activities addressed), and the degree of *accuracy* (quality, acceptability of the message). For example, lower levels functions would include the ability to participate in casual conversations, express facts, and give instructions; content would include concrete topics such as one's background, personal interests, and current affairs; accuracy would mean that one's speech be comprehensible to the average interlocutor (not necessarily a highly educated native speaker). At the highest levels, functions would include being able to counsel, persuade, and negotiate; content would include abstract topics and those relating to professional concerns; accuracy would mean that one's speech be extensive, precise and appropriate, i.e. nearly equivalent to an educated native speaker's speech patterns.

As the preceding discussion has shown, a proficiency-based program is one whose objectives stress the ability to use the language beyond the formal materials or activities presented in any particular classroom "course". This ability must be encouraged at very early levels of instruction, not delayed until later stages when control of grammatical and lexical structures are presumed to be greater. Students must be given communicative goals appropriate for them at even the *earliest* levels, goals which they can use to provide them with a sense of realistic accomplishment as they proceed from lower to higher levels of learning. By building proficiency oriented goals into each stage of the continuum, guidelines such as the ACTFL ones hope to lead students to the point where they can project their abilities to use the language beyond the classroom.

3. Competence and Proficiency in African Languages

We now turn to examine how the notions of competence and proficiency have been dealt with in the field of African language instruction. In the broadest sense, the term "competence" has always been acknowledged to be a difficult one. Given the small student enrollments, the lack of teaching materials, the scarcity of native speakers and qualified teachers, and the fluctuating demands for specific African languages, how much can be realistically accomplished within the confines of a limited academic program?

As early as the 1960 conference (Bordie 1960), opinions varied as to the degree of competence which had to be met, the nature and number of languages

for which such competence could be achieved, and the distinction between competence for practical vs. scholarly use. Welmers suggested that aiming at a high level of competence in any particular language was less relevant than "developing the ability to acquire a little competence in several languages with a high degree of accuracy..." (1960:12). Competence was a relative notion, and he went on to suggest that the widest use languages like Swahili and Hausa should require higher levels of competence than less predominant languages such as Shona or Bambara. At the same conference, however, Cole came to the opposite conclusion:

Nothing less than the highest possible level of communication should be our objective in any attempt at teaching or learning African languages, whatever the undertaking for which this may be a preparation...only these standards can do justice to the dignity of the peoples, the languages and the cultures of Africa, and to the kind of relationship of mutual trust, respect, and cooperation which we are anxious to establish with them... (Cole 1960:57-8).

From these two statements, it seems clear that Welmers was thinking in terms of "linguistic competence" whereas Cole was aiming for "communicative competence".

It was not until the 1984 Michigan State conference on materials developments (Wiley forthcoming) that a major statement concerning proficiency in African languages was issued. At that conference, it was specifically recommended that any prospective beginning courses in African languages be aimed at the "Intermediate Low" level of proficiency as defined in the ACTFL Provisional Guidelines. Unless students were trained to reach this minimal proficiency level, there would be little hope that they could continue to improve in performance or even function in the language on their own in an unsupervised field situation. For a number of the participants of this conference, the notion of a standardized set of measurable proficiency goals divorced from actual classroom performance was quite novel. Some had been vaguely familiar with the FSI scales but considered them irrelevant for their situation. Few were generally aware of the work of ACTFL and of the existence of their guidelines. Once these became known, however, the possibility for adapting them to the specific purposes of AL instruction was clear.

Indeed, it has always been the hope of the ACTFL developers that their guidelines would prove adaptable and applicable to languages other than the modern Western ones for which they were originally written (Liskin-Gasparro

1984). Here is their vision of the broad applicability of their guidelines:

They are designed to guide curriculum and materials development as well as to provide a graduated sequence of learning goals for teachers and students...Measurable proficiency goals will form the basis for curriculum planning and classroom teaching. Students will more quickly develop a sense of accomplishment and will be able to refer to these "yardsticks" to measure their progress. The complex problem of articulation, the coordination of content between grades and course levels, can also begin to be addressed. Student evaluation and placement can be based on actual language proficiency instead of on inaccurate and relatively uninformative measures of "seat time". It is important to stress that the guidelines are not meant to be a substitute for methodology. On the contrary, they may be used with a range of methodologies, techniques, materials and texts and should, therefore, be more appropriately regarded as an organizing principle or system (ACTFL 1982, preface).

In other words, not only do teachers benefit from guidelines which help them evaluate their students, shape their curriculum, and guide their classroom conduct. Students also need to know what is expected of them, where they are headed, and how they are to get there if they are expected to maintain their motivation and interest in language learning. Furthermore, administrators can use the guidelines in areas of placement and coordination between different levels or different institutions. Finally, textbook developers will be guided to produce materials which are at last satisfactory and relevant to the needs of all concerned. To summarize, proficiency guidelines are envisioned as being fundamental to the health and development of every aspect of a foreign language program, whether it concerns the widely studied modern European languages or the less commonly taught languages of Africa.

3.1. The Need for Proficiency Guidelines in African Language Programs

In a recent survey (McDonnell 1983) which asked recipients of federally funded language fellowships to assess their language training programs, it was reported that, on all measures, Africanists consistently rated the effectiveness of their language training and their own language competence much lower than their colleagues in other world areas. The report asked: "Can training strategies be adjusted to diminish the effect of more difficult languages or less developed teaching materials?" (McDonnell 1983:73). But "training strategies" can only improve if we have some very clear ideas of what we wish our training programs

to accomplish. It is only with the establishment of program goals and objectives, in the form of detailed guidelines for proficiency, that we can begin to look for improvement in all the components of our language programs. In the sections to follow, we discuss what some of these areas are.

3.1.1. Materials Development

Many Africanists consider the lack of adequate instructional materials to be the most critical problem facing the field of AL instruction. Given the small number of potential users, the fluctuating demands for particular languages, the time required to write good materials, and the high costs of publishing, the feasibility of having many textbooks on African languages to choose from will always be small. It is because of this fact that the quality of such materials must be high to begin with. The field can no longer afford to tolerate the wide range of quality and usefulness apparent in existing materials. New materials, be they textbooks, audiovisuals, or reference works, must be designed with the utmost care and foresight, since they may well remain the only ones available for some time to come.

In an effort to determine which qualities a "good" African language textbook should have, the organizers of the 1984 Michigan State conference (Dwyer forthcoming) invited papers to specifically address this problem. The paper by Bennett and Biersteker (forthcoming) set forth a questionnaire which they had used to evaluate a number of existing Swahili textbooks. An important component of their questionnaire instrument was the "performance evaluation chart", a chart describing the levels of "performance" (i.e. proficiency) which the textbooks were supposedly aimed at. In their opinion, textbooks must be responsible for specifying the levels of proficiency that students successfully completing the course are expected to achieve. Their chart, a more complete version of which is found in Bennett and Biersteker (n.d.), consists in fact of three tables of matrices, one for each level of proficiency (presumably low, mid, high). Each box, representing the intersection of "mode" (e.g. abstract, input, output) and "media" (e.g. aural/oral, reading/writing, lexical/traditional), contains a few compactly worded, diagnostic proficiency descriptors. Descriptors for speaking skills are found at the intersection of oral plus output, reading skills at writing plus input, writing skills at writing plus output, active vocabulary at lexical plus output, and so forth. Within each box, units are distinguished, based on the hierarchical complexity of linguistic units (building from word to sentence up to discourse level). In concept and

design, this performance chart is a very detailed schema for defining levels of proficiency. In fact, they state: "The same framework that can be used to specify the profile of a given student's performance may serve to specify the levels aimed at by a language course... (Bennett & Biersteker forthcoming, p. 4). This statement is clearly in line with ACTFL's thinking, quoted earlier, in which one of the main uses of proficiency guidelines is to guide and inform the development of new materials.

The need for standards in the development of African materials is indeed necessary. We have only to glance at the prefaces to several popularly used beginning courses to see the range of "goals" stated, the vagueness with which they are defined, and the lack of consensus among the writers.

- (1) This book provides an intensive Swahili course for first-year students in college and universities... My aim throughout has been to write a book that could be used by both students studying alone and by a teacher with his class. Since language is communication, ideally this book is envisaged in the hands of a practical teacher who is willing to experiment with the teaching of situational Swahili and to share with his students the joys of learning a new language (Zawawi 1976:xi).
- (2) The goal of the course is to develop a high degree of facility in speaking Hausa. By this we mean that the student should be able to speak Hausa as fast as he speaks English (that is, without frequent and extended pauses) with few grammatical errors and with good pronunciation. Upon completion, the student will have the wherewithal to express in Hausa any thought that he can express in English, the only limitation being that of vocabulary... (Cowan & Schuh 1976:5).
- (3) The overall approach taken here is that of a situated or contextualized natural conversation: each dialogue represents a real situation that can potentially be replicated in the student's own daily life... Most of the lessons are planned in such a way that they can be covered in a week, depending on the difficulty and the grammatical concepts under consideration... The twenty units presented here constitute a full year of course work in Lingala (Bokamba 1981:ii-iii).
- (4) [The] dialogues usually take place between the instructor and one or more of his students. Since the aim of the course is attainment of conversational competence, this material is organized in such a way that from the very beginning, students should use Swahili; i.e. the dialogues cover a narrow range of topics which can be realistically used in the classroom (e.g. peoples' names, where they live, what they are studying, etc.), and they are designed to elicit responses without imposing on the students the task of role playing (Hinnebusch & Mirza 1979:xi-xii).

The first quote deals mainly with the intended users of the book and provides no statement of level of proficiency other than "first year" level. Yet the contents of the course clearly take the learner beyond that, well into "second year" levels. The second quote, states clearly that a "high" degree of speaking proficiency is the goal and equates this (rather naively) with being able to express "any thought" in Hausa that can be expressed in English. Yet the contents of the book do not come close to preparing students to perform at this high level. In the third quote, the stress is on life-like authenticity of the dialogues and the length of time needed to do the course. It makes no mention of any level of proficiency unless we were to interpret "full year of course work" as indicative of that. In the last quote, the goal of "conversational competence" is defined quite narrowly in terms of functions and topics relevant to the classroom.

We need go no further than these prefaces to see the lack of common ground on goals, contents, and instructional techniques of our textbooks. While such degrees of freedom can be tolerated in materials for the major European languages, where newer and glossier textbooks and revisions compete with each other every few years, this will never be the case for African languages (with the possible exception of Swahili or Hausa). It is therefore incumbent on developers of African language materials that they arrive at a consensus on setting standards to guide their efforts.

3.1.2. Instructors

The success of an AL program depends as much, and perhaps even more, on the quality of instruction and instructors as it does on the materials used. In common with a number of other exotic FL programs, AL instructors may range all the way from tenured faculty members to non-academic personnel working on a temporary, short-term basis. In the early 1960s, African languages were typically team-taught by a linguist and a native speaker. The linguist was not usually fluent in the language but had a good structural grasp of the language or of languages closely related to it. In those early classes, the role of the native speaker was rather restricted, confined to modelling as frequently as necessary only those linguistic structures systematically introduced by the linguist. In beginning classes, particularly, the native speaker was seldom allowed to participate in life-like or free conversations with students.

In the typical AL classroom of the 1980s, however, the teaching staff can vary considerably. In some programs, the major languages like Hausa and

Swahili are frequently taught by a full-time faculty member of a department, usually linguistics, who is fluent in the language, does research on it, is trained to some degree in language pedagogy, or may even have written the "standard" textbook of the language. Equally likely within those same programs, particularly for the Level II and III languages (Wiley 1979), are instructors who are African graduate students with either native or second language fluency in the language, teaching autonomously in the classroom though under the general supervision of a faculty member or language coordinator. Such students are usually pursuing higher degrees in linguistics, applied linguistics, or language education and have therefore had some exposure to FL methodology. In some cases, however, these graduate students' language teaching experience is either minimal, having been confined to first language learners at home, or else non-existent, this often being the case with those hired as part-time tutors for individualized instruction in Level II or III languages.

The advantages and disadvantages of native vs. non-native speaking instructors are obvious. The biggest drawback of non-native speaking instructors is the upper limits placed on their ability to be spontaneous in the language or truly knowledgeable and comfortable about the culture, due to restricted real life experiences in that language and culture. The biggest drawbacks of native speaking instructors are their lack of adequate training, either linguistic or pedagogical, their susceptibility to peer pressure by their students, and the inevitable cycle of discontinuity they create by their graduation and the need to search anew for "similarly qualified" replacements.

Yet the need for native speakers in AL programs appears likely to increase. With recent emphases on communicative goals and the need for comprehensibility and authenticity of texts, the role of native-speaking instructors will grow in significance. As Giauque says (1975), "Native speakers provide authentic challenges to students to communicate with one of their peers who speaks the language natively (p. 128);...[their main job] is that of *animateur*...to keep things moving in the group and to create a [native] ambience" (p. 129). Native speakers, as embodiments of their culture, succeed in bringing immediate authenticity into the classroom where no others possibly can. And in those cases where teaching materials are minimal, as is true for the majority of Level II or III African languages, then native speakers are utterly essential to an AL program (Wiley 1981).

This unavoidable disparity in the qualifications and experience of AL instructors is simply accepted as a given with which our present programs must contend. But efforts to compensate for such inequalities will have to be made. Perhaps the two most important avenues for improvement lie in instituting more in-service teacher training workshops and in having detailed guidelines for teaching African languages generally, or even specific guidelines for specific languages. Certainly native speaking instructors need and deserve as much support as they can get, and having such guidelines designed to help them make sense of the diverse methods, materials, and needs of students that are thrust upon them in the typical African language classroom can only be to their advantage. As for non-native speaking instructors, they especially need proficiency oriented guidelines to counterbalance their all-too-natural inclination to focus on structural goals, leaving any communicative and cultural goals for last.

3.1.3. Student Needs

Language students, more than other students, demand and are willing to tolerate continual evaluations of their progress. Given the nature of language learning as a process which develops in stages over time, it is only natural that students be intensely involved in knowing where they stand at any stage along this continuum. Apart from external measures such as periodic tests, students need other non-judgmental criteria to help them gauge their own sense of progress in learning a language. They need to have a broad perspective of what they will know by the end of a given period of instruction and what they would be able to do better after that period than before. Language learning objectives are just as much a part of students' concerns as they are of teachers' concerns. In cases where an African language must be learned in the self-instruction mode or in the field, then learning guidelines become extremely important for measuring self-assessment. (A good practical field manual which includes a set of self-evaluation measures is that of Brewster and Brewster 1976; see also Oskarsson 1978 for a general discussion on self-assessment.)

However, in order for objectives to be meaningful to students, they must reflect in crucial ways what students wish to accomplish by studying the language. As Rivers states, "Students determine our course objectives. Our course objectives determine our content" (1983:11). For her, proficiency objectives such as the ILR definitions or the ACTFL guidelines are desirable "if we know *for what purposes the students will need to use the language*" (1983:17,

italics hers). Savignon makes this point about student motivation: "If learners do not subsequently experience success in terms of their own interests, they will not pursue their study for long" (1983:126).

Students enrolled in African language courses are generally undergraduates fulfilling a foreign language requirement or advanced level graduate students planning to carry out specialized fieldwork in Africa. Some students, graduate as well as undergraduate, simply take African languages to broaden their cultural as well as ethnic awareness. Enrollment is generally small, seldom exceeding ten for introductory courses, and more often averaging five students across course levels and languages.

In an effort to find out more about the students enrolled in AL courses at Indiana University, a brief survey on students' goals in learning an African language was undertaken in the first semester of the academic year 1984. (The questionnaire was adapted and compressed from one administered to foreign language students at University of Illinois by Rivers (1983:45-46), and is found in Appendix A). As the population was rather small ($N=33$), no attempt was made to subject the results of this survey to statistical analysis. An informal tally of the results, however, confirm the generally known differences between undergraduate and graduate student goals in learning an African language. The undergraduates ($N=18$) ranked the following as their three most important objectives (in descending order of importance):

communicate orally with speakers of an African language

gain an understanding of one's ethnic origins

know something about languages very different from English

Undergraduate interests are diverse and deal with personal needs and general intellectual curiosity. Their need for using a foreign language is at best a deferred one, especially so in the case of African languages. Graduate students, by contrast, are professionally oriented. The African language is an integral component of their specialized training and they are very concerned about putting this knowledge into imminent practice in the target culture. The three most important goals, in descending order of importance, for graduate students ($N=15$) were:

communicate orally with speakers of an African language

understand the worldview and values of speakers of an African language

use the African language as a tool for research purposes

What is interesting about this is that, despite their differences, both groups cited oral communication as the most important goal in learning an African language. This goal is consistent with the fact that student evaluations inevitably cite "the need for more oral practice and conversation" as an overall weakness of AL courses. Having guidelines which stress proficiency at various stages should do much to sustain the motivation of students and guide them toward achieving a greater overall functional ability in the language, especially speaking ability. With guidelines, students can become more fully participatory in setting goals for themselves and in realizing a greater sense of self-accomplishment at whatever levels of proficiency they may set for themselves, or that may be set for them by their instructors.

3.1.4. Linkage of Curricula

Another crucial area in which proficiency guidelines will contribute to improvement in AL programs is the area which FL specialists in curriculum development call "articulation" (Lange 1983) but which we prefer to call "linkage". Linkage deals with the sequencing and continuity of the content of a language curriculum. It can extend across levels of the "same" course, e.g. three sections of Swahili S101 at one institution, or the equivalents of Swahili S101 at three different institutions. Or it can extend through time in terms of the length of time required to complete the training, e.g. the three-year sequence comprising Swahili S101/2, S201/2, S301/2. As long as the curricula of AL programs was more or less independently set by individual institutions, linkage was a strictly internal problem. But with the continued growth of inter-institutional cooperation in the summer AL programs, now expanded to include intensive study abroad for advanced levels (so far only for Swahili and Hausa), the problem of linkage becomes one of greater mutual concern to the broader community of institutions and requires much greater coordination than in the past. How can we move toward more standardization of the outcomes of AL courses within institutions as well as between institutions? How can we overcome the problem which plagues summer instructors teaching higher level courses, who complain that their students rarely match in overall knowledge and ability even though they have taken "equivalent" courses and perhaps even used the same teaching materials? The problem is especially critical if the summer study abroad projects, which represent a considerably greater investment of resources and

manpower, are to achieve the measures of success hoped for. We can begin to solve these linkage problems only after there exists a community-wide consensus on the goals and expectations we set for our AL courses and for our students.

3.1.5. Evaluation and Testing

The final and not the least important area where detailed guidelines will benefit AL programs concerns evaluation and testing. There is probably no other area of FL instruction which AL instructors as a whole are the least knowledgeable about than how to test and evaluate their students. Since most of the teaching materials used in AL courses fail to suggest any evaluation procedures to accompany the course work, classroom tests are largely teacher-improvised and ad hoc in nature, resulting in a wide variation of quality, validity, and reliability.

Most AL tests are of the pencil-and-paper "achievement" type, which concentrate on discrete items, usually of grammar, selected from materials presented from the course and which generally have little context or cohesive structure beyond the level of the sentence (see generalized sample in Wiley 1981:21-27). This is understandable, given that most AL instructors (excepting many teachers of Swahili) are first and foremost linguists concerned with structure. However, if we accept that our primary responsibility is to train students to achieve some level of functional proficiency in an African language (whether in speaking, writing, or whatever skill), then we must also see to it that our testing procedures reflect that concern. Unless we understand clearly what we mean by "proficiency at level X", we will continue to construct tests which fail us in evaluating our objectives. Once we have these objectives, however, we can begin to move closer to more realistic proficiency testing, which can range in format all the way from the FSI-type oral interview, as in the one being developed by Bennett and Biersteker (n.d.) for Swahili, to the establishment of "test item banks" of the type being developed for African languages at Indiana University, and on to the development of more "hybrid" tests which incorporate both achievement and proficiency measures, as illustrated in Omaggio (1983).

4. Provisional Guidelines for Hausa, Lingala, and Swahili

The proficiency guidelines suggested for the three African languages presented here are modeled in spirit, if not in content, on the ACTFL Provisional Guidelines. We have chosen to work within this model in spite of acknowledged weaknesses (Liskin-Gasparro 1984) and criticisms (Bennett & Biersteker n.d.).

The ACTFL model (and its predecessors) is empirically based, stemming from an accumulation of experience with student performance at various levels in various languages. Moreover, the model's simplicity of design can be easily grasped by all potential users, i.e. instructors, students, and administrators alike. Finally, the model lends itself easily to being adapted to the specific structures and contexts of our languages.

Following ACTFL, our guidelines are divided into the four skill areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, with a fifth section on sociocultural knowledge. The progression up the nine-point scale of proficiency is as follows. The first three stages of Novice specify proficiency at the lowest survival level. The next three levels of Intermediate specify proficiency for a broader range of survival and basic social needs. It is the level at which creativity with language begins to take place. The two levels of Advanced build up from routine social interactions toward limited work and professional proficiency. It is the level at which the learner can function as a full conversational partner, capable of using language to resolve a specified range of problems. The final and highest level specified is Superior, which aims at proficiency in informal and some formal situations dealing with most practical, social, and professional areas.

Unlike the ACTFL guidelines, however, we do not believe it necessary to specify an equal number of levels for all four skills. The full nine levels have only been specified for speaking and comprehension skills, which are the most crucial to oral competence. Elsewhere, we have conflated levels where it seemed more appropriate to the particular language under consideration. For example, there are five levels specified for reading and writing skills in Swahili and Hausa, but only three for writing in languages like Lingala and Bambara, where writing skills are unlikely to be of much practical relevance to the foreigner. Similarly, only four levels were deemed necessary to specify sociocultural knowledge, since a truly deep understanding of this area can only come about from living in the target culture.

Proficiency descriptors are stated in terms of positive "can do" statements. We avoid insofar as possible statements which negatively characterize performance, as do many of the ACTFL descriptors. The most explicit descriptors specifying structural and functional objectives are found under the guidelines for speaking. In order not to confuse statements of grammatical function and accuracy with those of social function and accuracy, we have divided the speaking descriptors into five criteria: (1) phonology/intonation; (2) morphology/syntax;

(3) vocabulary; (4) fluency; (5) communicative tasks/speech functions. Such a distribution allows for the development of a full speaking "profile" (see Higgs and Clifford 1982) and is useful for targeting as well as diagnosing specific aspects of competence in speaking. The first three are traditional criteria and need no particular explanation. The fourth, fluency, has to do with factors such as rate of speech, hesitation phenomena, and ability to use a variety of progressively higher communicative strategies (Savignon 1983:40) to convey the message.

The fifth criterion deals with the language functions and notions (see Sec. 2.2.1) for which foreigners would most likely need to use an African language. In deciding which communicative tasks and speech functions were relevant at the various levels of proficiency, we relied on a questionnaire distributed to the Africanist faculty, graduate students with field experience in Africa, and African students of Indiana University. The detailed questionnaire (see Appendix B) elicited the opinions of these groups by asking them to rate the relative importance of a representative range of topics, situations, and functions with respect to which an African language would be used (as contrasted to the use of the transnational languages English, French, and Arabic). The range of topics and functions were based on those suggested by Harlow, Smith, and Garfinkel (1980), Wilkins (1976), and the various publications of the Council of Europe (Trim et al. 1980, van Ek and Trim 1984).

The choice of particular functions to stress at specific levels may in some instances govern the choice and sequence of certain grammatical structures. For example, being able to introduce oneself by name or nationality is a survival level function, so that copula-type constructions would be learned at this level. Similarly so with a reasonably early introduction of basic adjectives, which can be meaningfully used for the function of describing items in the immediate environment. Certain common imperatives should also be introduced at an early comprehension proficiency level (as in the Total Physical Response method), since they constitute a good base of "comprehensible input" that is functionally meaningful and productive and that does not require production skills on the part of the students.

The descriptors for the other language skills are much more general and integrative than for speaking. In other words, goals set for reading, for example, refer more to abilities to interpret the meanings of texts than to abilities to recognize specific grammatical structures or vocabulary. This is in keeping with some current views of proficiency in these more neglected media (see de Groot

1975; Larson & Jones 1984; Omaggio 1983, 1984; Swaffar forthcoming). Finally, sociolinguistic appropriateness of language use and knowledge of culture areas as studied through the language are specified broadly under the guidelines for sociocultural knowledge, although references to this area may also found among the descriptors for the other skills. For example, under listening comprehension, one of the objectives stated is the ability to interpret some non-verbal gestural language by the Advanced level.

Given this basic division into five areas of proficiency, these guidelines could be used with great flexibility. For example, if the objective of a particular AL course is restricted to achieving oral proficiency only, then the guidelines on reading and writing are simply ignored. More typically, the objectives of a course might specify an Intermediate Low level in speaking, an Intermediate Mid level in listening, and a Novice level for both reading and writing. Such a set of objectives incorporates in a natural way what Stevick (1984) calls the "comprehension advantage" in FL learning (or what others mean by the "passive vs. active" distinction), while at the same time stressing the aural/oral dimensions which are the primary ones as far as African languages are concerned.

It should be stressed again that guidelines such as these are not meant to substitute for any particular course syllabus, set of course materials, or set of teaching techniques. Rather, they act as a guide and a check, for both instructors and students, by showing what the necessary stages are that lead to functional abilities for any given level or skill of an African language. Given the paucity of pedagogical materials in the field of AL instruction, this supplemental aid should prove extremely useful.

The provisional guidelines for proficiency in Hausa, Lingala, and Swahili are presented here with the hope that they will stimulate greater dialogue and cooperation between institutions offering African languages. It is expected that the guidelines will undergo many alterations as we try to implement them in conducting our classes, evaluating our students, and designing our materials. If this turns out to be true, it will be proof that the field of African Language instruction is indeed in the forefront of the movement to achieve real functional proficiency in some of the world's important though lesser known languages.

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QUESTIONNAIRE ON STUDENTS' GOALS IN
LEARNING AN AFRICAN LANGUAGE AT I.U.

- I. Your major/discipline: _____ undergrad/grad/other (circle one)
- II. African language: _____ Level: beg/interm/adv (circle one)
- III. Was the above your first choice of an African language? YES _____ NO _____
 a) If NO: what language would you have preferred? _____
 b) If YES: suppose it had not been offered this year; would you have taken any other African language? YES (specify) _____ NO _____
 c) Will you continue studying this language next year? YES _____ NO _____
- IV. Other languages you have studied (not necessarily African):
 Name(s) of language(s): _____
 No. years completed: _____
 High school/college: _____
- V. Below is a list of goals commonly thought to be most important in studying a foreign language. Which of these are the most relevant for you in studying an African language? Rank each goal in order of importance, ranging from 1 for highest interest to 5 for lowest interest, by circling an appropriate number.
- | H1 | Lo | |
|-----------|----|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to communicate orally with speakers of the AL |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to understand the worldview and values of speakers of AL |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to use AL as a tool for research purposes |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to understand more about how languages work (general linguistic interest) |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to facilitate travel and living abroad (non-professional needs) |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to fulfill a language requirement (specify): _____ |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to gain an understanding of your ethnic origins |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to promote cross-cultural awareness and international communication |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to be proficient in another language for its own sake and enjoyment |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to obtain financial support for your studies |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to experience through language and language-related activities what it feels like to be a member of another linguistic/cultural group |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | | to know something about languages which are very different from English |

VI. Check which skills you consider the most important for you in this African Language:

_____ speaking	_____ writing
_____ listening	_____ translating
_____ reading	_____ interpreting

VII. Other comments you might wish to make:

APPENDIX B

I. Background Information

☐ Faculty ☐ Graduate Student ☐ I.U. Ph.D. ☐ male
☐ female

1. Field of specialization: _____
 Primary focus of field experience: ☐ national ☐ urban ☐ rural ☐ other

2. Which African languages, for which countries, do you know? Check whether language training was through formal courses or self-study.

Language	Country	Formal/Self	Length of study
_____	_____	____/____	_____
_____	_____	____/____	_____
_____	_____	____/____	_____

3. For each language, assess the degree of ability you have in the four language skills. 1 = fluent; 2 = good; 3 = adequate; 4 = fair; 5 = minimal.

Language:	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

4. Rank the following reasons why you need and use an African language (1 = most important, 5 = least important).

a. for basic survival needs (personal) in host country	1	2	3	4	5
b. to communicate as fully as possible for personal reasons in host country	1	2	3	4	5
c. to establish psychological/social credibility for your work even though the language is not essential to it	1	2	3	4	5
d. to maximize the success of your work (professional)	1	2	3	4	5
e. it is an essential, integral component of your work	1	2	3	4	5

5. Although you have studied this language and use it in your work, how much use in the field situation do you make of:

interpreters (to accompany you in your work)	1	2	3	4	5
transcribers (to write out taped materials)	1	2	3	4	5
translators (to work over materials after data collection)	1	2	3	4	5

II. Contextualized Language Skills

Rate the amount of each skill you use in the African language in the following contexts (1 = highest use; 5 = lowest use).

Reading

road signs, shop signs, market signs	1	2	3	4	5
advertisements (billboards, newspapers)	1	2	3	4	5
government forms	1	2	3	4	5
public notices, announcements (in post office, stations)	1	2	3	4	5
personal letters from local friends (may or not be written by scribes), including those received after leaving field	1	2	3	4	5
local newspapers, magazines	1	2	3	4	5
government publications, reports	1	2	3	4	5
general interest books published in the country	1	2	3	4	5
scholarly works written in European languages but containing terms, concepts expressed in the African language	1	2	3	4	5
field notes written down by you or transcribed by others	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Writing:

to complete forms (hotel registry, immigration)	1	2	3	4	5
to write personal letters	1	2	3	4	5
to write down letters dictated by non-literate speakers	1	2	3	4	5
to take short notes, misc. information (personal/place names)	1	2	3	4	5
to take extensive field notes	1	2	3	4	5
ability to transcribe the African language with reasonable accuracy	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Understanding, comprehending.

likely answers, responses to questions initiated by you	1	2	3	4	5
questions asked or information given by others about familiar topics	1	2	3	4	5
the gist of public announcements (town criers, p.a. systems at stations, airports)	1	2	3	4	5
radio news broadcasts	1	2	3	4	5
radio advertising of local products	1	2	3	4	5
natural conversations of native speakers on everyday topics	1	2	3	4	5
speeches at public gatherings	1	2	3	4	5
playback of recordings taped by you	1	2	3	4	5
body language, non-verbal gestures accompanying speech	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

III. Speech Functions in Communication

The following section deals with how a language functions in realistic give-and-take communication. Which of the following functions of speech do you consider important to know and use when speaking an African language? If you use more than one African language, identify which language is concerned

only when responses differ (1 = highest importance, 5 = lowest importance).

Socializing: (may include accompanying body gestures)

formulae to greet, take leave	1	2	3	4	5
formulae, etiquette at mealtimes	1	2	3	4	5
formulae to begin and end conversations	1	2	3	4	5
ways to introduce yourself, attract attention to yourself	1	2	3	4	5
ways to introduce other people to each other	1	2	3	4	5
ways to joke, convey humor	1	2	3	4	5
ways to make small talk (weather, neighbors)	1	2	3	4	5
ways to thank someone at appropriate social levels	1	2	3	4	5
ways to give, accept compliments	1	2	3	4	5
offering, receiving gifts	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Getting, giving, and responding to information and facts:

asking, expressing curiosity	1	2	3	4	5
reporting, describing, narrating	1	2	3	4	5
identifying, defining	1	2	3	4	5
explaining, showing	1	2	3	4	5
warning of danger	1	2	3	4	5
inquiring about possibility or lack thereof	1	2	3	4	5
inquiring about obligation, non-obligation	1	2	3	4	5
classifying	1	2	3	4	5
making comparisons	1	2	3	4	5
denying	1	2	3	4	5
offering assistance, declining assistance	1	2	3	4	5
expressing capability, incapability	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Getting things done:

giving instructions, directions to have something done	1	2	3	4	5
persuading others	1	2	3	4	5
suggesting, advising a course of action	1	2	3	4	5
seeking permission	1	2	3	4	5
promising to do something	1	2	3	4	5
refusing to do something	1	2	3	4	5
negotiating, compromising	1	2	3	4	5
requesting assistance	1	2	3	4	5
threatening, prohibiting, making conditions	1	2	3	4	5
borrowing, lending, returning things	1	2	3	4	5
dealing with inducements, corrupt practices =	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Expressing opinion:

expressing agreement, disagreement	1	2	3	4	5
expressing approval, disapproval	1	2	3	4	5
apologizing, making excuses	1	2	3	4	5
doubting, expressing uncertainty	1	2	3	4	5
expressing indifference	1	2	3	4	5
expressing certainty	1	2	3	4	5

expressing innuendo, concealed opinions	1	2	3	4	5
blaming someone	1	2	3	4	5
forgiving someone	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Expressing emotions:

pleasure, enjoyment	1	2	3	4	5
surprise, shock, puzzlement	1	2	3	4	5
want, intention, desire	1	2	3	4	5
disappointment	1	2	3	4	5
suspicion	1	2	3	4	5
hope, optimism	1	2	3	4	5
dislike, displeasure	1	2	3	4	5
anger, hostility	1	2	3	4	5
gratitude, appreciation	1	2	3	4	5
fear, anxiety	1	2	3	4	5
sympathy, grief, sorrow	1	2	3	4	5
impatience, annoyance	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

IV. General topics of conversation

Rate the importance, for you, of the following topics and situations when speaking an African language. Note that these deal with everyday conversational content and are not necessarily related to your professional interests and needs.

Personal:

particulars about yourself. others (age, nationality, family)	1	2	3	4	5
housing in host country (rent, repairs)	1	2	3	4	5
domestic help (interviewing, hiring, firing, domestic chores)	1	2	3	4	5
health and hygiene	1	2	3	4	5
values and ethics	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Travel:

public transport (distances, fares, directions, locations)	1	2	3	4	5
road conditions, traffic conditions	1	2	3	4	5
private transport (breakdowns, traffic laws, accidents)	1	2	3	4	5
entering, exiting a country	1	2	3	4	5
packing, moving	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Shopping:

bargaining (local markets, traders)	1	2	3	4	5
clothing (talking to tailors about size, fabric style)	1	2	3	4	5
weights and measurements	1	2	3	4	5
household items (furniture, kitchen ware)	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Services:

post, telegraph	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------	---	---	---	---	---

telephone	1	2	3	4	5
banks	1	2	3	4	5
police, fire, emergency	1	2	3	4	5
plumbing, electricity, house repairs	1	2	3	4	5
hospitals, dispensaries, medical supplies	1	2	3	4	5
garage, car repairs, gas stations	1	2	3	4	5
local government offices	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Language:

ask for names of things, people, concepts	1	2	3	4	5
ask meaning of a word, phrase	1	2	3	4	5
ask someone to repeat, speak more slowly	1	2	3	4	5
ask whether your usage is correct or not	1	2	3	4	5
ask about someone's language background	1	2	3	4	5
discuss your ability, skills in the African language	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Traditional life and culture:

kinship relations	1	2	3	4	5
social classes	1	2	3	4	5
taboos	1	2	3	4	5
major religious, cultural festivals and their significance	1	2	3	4	5
language lore (riddles, proverbs, folktales)	1	2	3	4	5
participation in ritual happenings (births, marriages, deaths)	1	2	3	4	5
daily domestic routines, food	1	2	3	4	5
farming, crops, domestic animals	1	2	3	4	5
arts and crafts	1	2	3	4	5
clothing	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Contemporary life and culture:

news items of world events	1	2	3	4	5
opinions on local, national affairs	1	2	3	4	5
jobs and employment	1	2	3	4	5
education and children	1	2	3	4	5
recreation (sports, games)	1	2	3	4	5
leisure (radio, TV, music, local movies, theatrical presentations)	1	2	3	4	5
popular science, technology	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

General comments you may have regarding this questionnaire:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN THIS SURVEY

PROVISIONAL GUIDELINES FOR PROFICIENCY IN HAUSA

Rozana Ma Newman and Sammani Sani

SPEAKING:

Within each speaking proficiency level, the numbers correspond to the following criteria:

- [1] phonology/intonation
- [2] morphology/syntax
- [3] vocabulary
- [4] fluency
- [5] communicative tasks/speech functions

NOVICE LOW (no real functional ability in the spoken language)

- [3] Able to produce some isolated words such as basic greetings or a few common nouns.

NOVICE MID (Able to operate only in very limited capacity in very predictable areas of need)

- [1] Can pronounce most segments, except for glottalized consonants and distinction between long/short vowels. Vowels remain strongly influenced by English. Can produce LoHi and HiLo tone patterns accurately.
- [2] Produces short formulaic learned utterances. Can use some very simple equational *nee/cee* sentences with animate sg/pl nouns and independent pronouns, respond to "what's this/that" questions, and use existential *akwai* sentences with common sg/pl inanimate nouns in classroom environment. Can respond to affirmative/negative questions of these sentence types.
- [3] Vocabulary limited to courtesy expressions, nouns denoting people or things in immediate environment, and independent, possessive, and demonstrative pronouns. Knows a few traditional Hausa names and can pronounce these correctly.

- [4] Can speak at a slow and hesitant rate of speech and may need to repeat frequently in order to be understood. Speaks only when spoken to.
- [5] Can exchange a few basic greetings, introduce self or others by name (*suunaanaa X*) and profession, and identify familiar objects in immediate surroundings. Uses a few polite terms of address.

NOVICE HIGH (Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances)

- [1] Can give correct intonation patterns of short 2 to 3 word declarative utterances. Beginning to master HiHi tone patterns in contrast to other di- and tri-syllabic patterns. Beginning to pronounce long vowels with full articulation values, though influence of English stress patterns may still interfere with length realization and affect comprehensibility.
- [2] Can respond affirmatively to simple non-verbal locative questions with *inaa* using the *sunàa* aspect pronoun set (all persons) and prepositional phrases of *kân*, *baayan*, *cikin* type, as well as the *gàa X* construction. Can use *sunàa* aspect pronouns with common non-verbal dynamic nouns (*barcii*, *màganaa*, *zàtoo*) in affirmative/negative sentences. Can formulate yes/no questions with appropriate intonation patterns in future and habitual tense/aspects. Beginning to use masc/fem/pl gender distinctions in noun-linker-possessor and independent possessive constructions. Can use common disyllabic verbs in affirmative sg/pl with imperative tone pattern. Can use stative form of common intransitive verbs.
- [3] Vocabulary deals mainly with familiar items in classroom environment, the weather, body parts. Knows some basic verbs of motion and common transitive verbs describing everyday actions, unitary adverbs of time and place, and the cardinal numbers from 1 to 20.
- [4] In basic interactions using learned structures, production still characterized by groping for words, irrelevant hand gestures, and raising the voice in an attempt to be understood. Beginning to respond with less hesitation to simple 2 to 3 word questions.
- [5] Able to greet one or more people with a greater variety of formulae, according to location, activity, time of day. Can identify oneself and others by name, ethnic group, hometown, country, language spoken. Can talk in limited ways about daily activities located in time or space, ask simple

who/what/where questions, and make simple requests. Can ask someone to repeat what they said or speak more slowly.

INTERMEDIATE LOW (Able to satisfy some basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements)

- [1] Vowel production starting to sound less foreign except for short vowels, particularly in open syllables. Tonal production becoming more differentiated though will still contribute to misunderstandings by native speaker used to foreigners. Production of glottalized vs. non-glottalized consonant pairs still underdiscriminated.
- [2] Has greater control of gender distinctions in nouns and adjectives, as well as pronouns, especially in first person possessive construction. Is beginning to control plural suffixes and tone patterns of familiar or frequently used nouns. Can use affirmative/negative "have" construction with noun/pronoun complements. Can produce correct word order of affirmative/negative declarative sentences containing indirect objects and adverbial or prepositional phrases. Can manipulate presence/absence of *yi* according to tense/aspect in constructions containing non-verbal dynamic nouns. Can use verb *fi* to express simple comparative notions. Beginning to correctly use relative *sukà* aspect in question word questions (including *yàayàa*, *nawà*, *mèc ya sâa*, *don mèc*). Controls adjectival constructions of the types modifier-linker-N and N *màì/màas* N. Can form single and double imperatives with subjunctive aspect pronouns, including hortative construction (*bàri mù* ____). Understands meaning and use of "ventive" Grade VI (-oo) verb forms under limited but appropriate conditions. Can respond to questions with *inaa zuwàa?* with *zâa nî*
- [3] Vocabulary expanding to include more verbs, especially high frequency irregular verbs and sensory verbs (*baa*, *barîi*, *ganîi*, *sanîi*, *jî*, *cî*), adjectival nouns of color, size, and age, sensory nouns (*zaafi*, *tsaamîi*, *karfi*), common conjunctions (*dà*, *amma*, *sabòodà*). Adverbs include those of direction and time formed with *dà*, *na*. Nouns deal with personal surroundings such as home life and family structure (including kinship terms of reference and address), parts of the body, personal health/sickness, names of foods, Western-style clothing. Numbers include cardinal and ordinal up to 100. Uses some common appropriate exclamations and idiomatic expressions (e.g. *habà*, *yâuwaa*, *maadallaa*, *shii kèc nan*). Greetings include forms appropriate to elders and

superiors.

- [4] Speaks less hesitantly and with fewer false starts. Attempts to respond with fuller, longer utterances although coping strategies may still include repetition, avoidance of certain words or structures, or fast nervous speech. Beginning to show initiative in opening conversations.
- [5] Able to give simple personal information about oneself and surroundings. Can describe and inquire about daily activities in past, habitual and future time. Able to give directions to get to a place, tell time, make polite requests and suggestions.

INTERMEDIATE MID (Able to satisfy survival needs and some limited social demands)

- [1] Overall production, including glottalized consonants and the bilabial articulation of *f*, is generally intelligible to an understanding native speaker; however, inadequate discrimination of tones or vowel length (e.g. *ya* vs. *yaa* with Hi tone) may still cause misunderstanding or require repetition. Question intonation beginning to sound less foreign.
- [2] Controls gender/number agreement in linkers and indefinite specifiers (including interrogative). Can produce a good range of plural forms of nouns. Can formulate compound N + N constructions. Controls double negative constructions and normal word order in equational sentences or those containing time adverbs (e.g. *jiyà*, *tùkùna*). Can use negative of *sunda* aspect pronouns as well as negative "have" construction. Can form relative clauses in *sukà* aspect using *wânda*, *wâdda*. Expanding use of subjunctive to express desire (with *soo* in continuative aspect), intent (*dòomin*), antecedent action (*kàafin*), necessity (*sai*, *doolè*, *yaa kàmaatà*), prohibition (*kadà*). Beginning to manipulate forms of Grade II verbs (except in continuative aspect), including irregular verbs *ḍaukàa*, *ḍiibàa*, *saamùu*. Controls form and use of participials ("waa verbal noun") of all verbs except Grade II. Clause types expanding to include conditional and time clauses with *ìdan*, clauses of purpose and intent, indirect questions (after verbs like *sanii*, *ji*, *gani*), and clause complementizers (*ceewaa*, *koo*). Beginning to build discourse structure with appropriate markers and expressions such *don hakà*, *à haalin yànzù*, *wàtākīlā*, *shin*, *wai*, *kumaa*, *fà*, *dai*, *jim kàḍan*.

- [3] Vocabulary expanding to include more concrete nouns relating to Hausa cultural areas (flora, fauna, farming, traditional clothing, local foods and ways of cooking them, marketing and formulae for bargaining). Time related vocabulary includes periods within the day (including prayer times), days of week, months, seasons of year. Can increasingly discriminate meaning and use of some conjunctions such as *sai*, *haɗ*, *gà/gàree*, *dà*.
- [4] Beginning to show some spontaneous use of language. Can maintain simple face-to-face conversations (e.g. outside classroom setting) although response time may still be halting at times. Often seeks clarification before responding.
- [5] Knows how to offer and request assistance or favors (including lending and borrowing), give orders, give compliments. Could initiate and conclude simple market transactions. Can express likes/dislikes and give opinions on a limited range of topics (foods, clothing, leisure activities). Can express simple physical or emotional states (hunger, happiness, sadness). Becoming more precise in details regarding notions of time, space, frequency. Able to greet according to greater variety of elements in the speech situation (topic, setting, listener).

INTERMEDIATE HIGH (Able to satisfy all survival needs and some routine social demands)

- [1] Production of segments sufficiently good to be understood most of the time by the average native speaker, although occasionally miscommunicates. Production of tonal and vowel length contrasts improving, though pairs like *saadi/sadii* may still be underdifferentiated.
- [2] Is beginning to manipulate the verbal grade system more productively to form intransitive/transitive pairs (e.g. *fūa/fūaɗ dà*, *tàaru/taaràa*, *cika/cikàa*, *fashèe/fasàa*). Beginning to control form and gender of "secondary" verbal noun forms of many common Grade II and other verbs. Uses a few auxiliary verbs such as *saakèe*, *taɓàa*, *dingàa* to express modification of action. Can manipulate higher numbers and multiples thereof in more complex combinations. Can answer negative questions appropriately. Exhibits greater use of adverbial modifiers and prepositional phrases of the types *gàme dà*, *wajen*, *à gùje* as well as a few common ideophones (*sam*, *faɗat*, *kirin*). Can use some productively derived formations such as agentive nouns, locative nouns, language names, adjectival past participials, ethnonymics (sg. *bà...ɗe*, pl.

-*aaɗaa*). Can use greater variety and complexity of noun modifiers, including diminutives, N + N constructions, relative clauses. Can express indefinite future time under appropriate conditions and use this tense/aspect in certain common fixed expressions such *yâu dà gòobe kâa iyâa*.

- [3] Vocabulary includes such topics such as modes of transportation, geographical features, points of the compass, principal towns and provinces of Nigeria, education, trade, farming and crops, local currency (both Naira and pound systems).
- [4] Conversational fluency on familiar topics is markedly faster with fewer hesitation phenomena, although exhibits lack of awareness of certain Hausa social conventions of conversation. Coping strategies include attempts to paraphrase or modify the utterance to get the message across, exhibiting greater creative use of language.
- [5] Can talk informally about one's background (country, language, education, hometown, travel experiences, important dates). Could conduct a simple interview with a Hausa-speaking visitor to find out basic information regarding his/her background, reasons for being in the U.S., and future plans.

ADVANCED (Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements)

- [1] Can usually be understood by average native speaker and seldom miscommunicates. Production of tone and length more accurate with less influence from English vowel and stress systems.
- [2] Has good grasp of the form and use of verbal nouns and participial *-waa* verb forms in continuative tense/aspect. Gaining more control of form and meaning of secondary verbal grades (Gr. I *-da* "action applied onto", Gr. IV *-êe* "action totally done", Gr. V *-aĩ* "action away" (so-called "causative"), Gr. VI *-oo* "action toward speaker or for benefit of someone", Gr. VII *-u* "passive action, potential action"). Controls form and use of all pronoun paradigms. Can express more degrees of comparison, contrast, and relationship, using such verbs as *fĩ*, *kai*, *bàmbantàa*, *dàngantàa* and various derivatives of nouns such as *kàmaa*, *siffàa*. Can formulate "universal" notions with prefix *koo-* and use them with appropriate tense/aspects. Controls subjunctive aspect in a broader range of uses and meanings. Uses a greater range of clause markers and clause types, including topicalization and focus constructions, to link ideas together in discourse and narrative.

- [3] Expansion of general vocabulary which relates to Hausa cultural areas (traditional life ceremonies, arts and crafts, popular folklore). Can express notions involving permission, refusal, prevention. Has good grasp of the range of meanings and collocations of such multivalent verbs as *ci*, *shaa*, *kai*, *bugaa*. Uses a large variety of conjunctions and adverbial/prepositional phrases. Can use some popular proverbs appropriate to particular contexts. Knows and can use some Hausa word games and puzzles.
- [4] Overall fluency much smoother although sometimes gropes for specific or technical words. Discourse structure shows increased use of linking elements and discourse markers.
- [5] Able to discuss qualities, attributes of people, things and make detailed comparisons and contrasts. Can handle situations involving permission, prohibition, necessity, doubt. Can satisfy routine social situations as guest or host and knows how to accept/refuse offers, invitations, apologies. Can express dissatisfaction or disapproval, can make complaints, and is precise in seeking advice or assistance. Knows the etiquette of conversational turn-taking (e.g. use of *na'am*, *Allah?*/*Allah kuwa?*), how to interrupt, change the subject, terminate the episode. Can recite an experience or retell a story (e.g. folktale, English or African) with appropriate discourse markers, narrative form, and stylistic accuracy. Can handle limited work requirements if there are no complicating factors.

ADVANCED PLUS (Able to satisfy most work requirements and shows some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence)

- [1] Production seldom interferes with understanding though it may still sound foreign, especially in placement of tone, intonation, and vowel quality,
- [2] Strong in basic grammar and vocabulary. Has good control of form, use, and meaning of tense/aspect pronouns as well as all other pronoun paradigms. Can manipulate tense/aspects to express wide range of time-related actions, including conditionality (including contrary-to-fact statements) and sequentiality of actions in narration. Can use wide range of secondary verbal nouns in diverse syntactic constructions, including nominalizations. Has good grasp of derivational processes such as noun compounding, reduplication for expressing varieties of "plurality" in verbs (*tallɗunaa*), verbal nouns (*shàye-shàye*), adverbs (*sànnu-sànnu* as well as distributive *lookàcìi-lookàcìi*),

and de-intensification in adjectives (*jaaja-jaaja*). Can use productive derivational suffixes for forming abstract nouns (*yaarantakàa*, *ƙarancii*) and derived verbs *bàakuntàa*, *gajàrtàa*, *wahàltàa*). Uses a broad range of constructions for expressing emphasis, focus, contrast.

- [3] Vocabulary includes use of many more derivatives to express more precise notions and shades of meaning. General vocabulary is broad enough to discuss most topics of personal interests as well as special fields of competence. Idiomatic expressions include condolences and congratulations. Expressive language includes range of exclamations, interjections, and ideophones, accompanied by body gestures where appropriate. Controls a wide range of loanwords and loan concepts from Arabic, English, and Yoruba, with some understanding of their phonological and lexical adaptations into contemporary Hausa.
- [4] Fluency and ease of speech generally remarkable but may be affected by stress or tension. Shows good ability to use circumlocutions as a coping strategy. Able to shift somewhat between Standard Hausa and non-standard or dialectal forms if the social context requires.
- [5] Able to talk about specialized or concrete topics with detailed accuracy. Can describe, narrate, explain in present, past, and future, as well as hypothesize (including contrary-to-fact statements). Can consistently communicate facts in an uncomplicated manner and handle familiar situations involving some complications. Can distinguish fact from opinion. Expressive use of language sufficient to convey broad range of emotions, opinions, and social attitudes (pleasure, gratitude, hope, sorrow, doubt, disapproval, deference).

SUPERIOR (Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations in practical, social, and professional topics)

- [1] Pronunciation is good and always comprehensible to average native speaker; it may even approach native accuracy.
- [2] Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb a native speaker. Control is strong in high frequency areas, but may be less consistent in more complex or less common structures.

- [3] Rarely has to grope for a word except for technical concepts and specialized vocabulary. Controls broader use of proverbs and colloquialisms in context, and is familiar with some Hausa word games and puzzles.
- [4] Can discuss particular areas of competence with ease and confidence in most informal and some formal situations. Use of circumlocutions is being replaced by greater ability to be precise.
- [5] Can support opinions, hypothesize, and use conjecture. Can compare and contrast with detail and precision, and draw conclusions. In general, can communicate in a broad variety of situations and social levels and handle all but the most abstract topics.

LISTENING:

NOVIC -LOW (No practical understanding of the spoken language)

May recognize Hausa (as opposed to another African language) by being able to pick out occasional isolated words such as forms of address, high frequency nouns, or politeness formulae.

NOVICE MID (Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need)

Can recognize most critical consonant distinctions in Hausa except for glottalized/non-glottalized ones. Beginning to distinguish LoHi and HiLo tone patterns. Recognizes vocabulary relating to simple elementary needs and basic politeness expressions. Phrases recognized have mostly been memorized. Can understand utterances of 2 to 3 words long such as simple equational and existential sentences, declarative and interrogative, when the context is clear. Can respond to simple verbal commands by performing the action specified. Ability to understand is frequently characterized by long pauses or by requests for repetition or slower speech. Often confuses words that sound similar.

NOVICE HIGH (Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorised utterances in areas of immediate need)

Can follow slow tempo speech; attempts at understanding are primarily in terms of morph by morph or word by word decoding strategies. Misunderstandings due to incorrect segmentation of morphemes or words, or failure to discriminate features of tone and vowel length. Can understand most simple

imperatives, as well as simple affirmative/negative questions (equational, existential, locative) relating to oneself, the weather, location of things in the immediate environment. Recognizes the numbers 1 to 20. Vocabulary is primarily limited to common animate nouns in the singular, with some recognition of plurals of familiar nouns. Understands possessive constructions and other constructions with independent possessive pronouns. Beginning to get the gist of longer non-learned utterances in highly contextualized situations although may not always recall specific items and may often request repetition before responding.

INTERMEDIATE LOW (Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs, minimum courtesy and travel requirements)

Beginning to recognize a number of minimal differences based on tone and vowel length. Can identify many more pronoun paradigms with fewer misinterpretations and recognize all non-verbal and many verbal constructions, though may have difficulties recognizing continuative tense/aspect constructions. Can understand most requests for information as well as multiple commands. In areas of personal needs and everyday activities, can understand non-memorized material sufficiently to maintain short conversational episodes. Comprehension areas comprise personal (including health and sickness) and biographical information, numbers, dates, notions of time, space and direction, meals, colors, and marketing scenes. Listening strategies decreasingly concerned with word by word decoding than with more global strategies. Can consistently understand common expressions, instructions, comments of approval/disapproval used by instructor to conduct and organize the class.

INTERMEDIATE MID (Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about survival needs and some limited social conventions)

Can understand most careful to normal speech on familiar topics spoken by native speakers accustomed to dealing with foreigners. Enlarged vocabulary permits some comprehension of topics beyond survival needs, including tastes and opinions in food, clothing, leisure activities. Recognition expanding of verbal grade forms, verbal nouns, pronoun sets, gender/number agreement, noun plurals. Beginning to understand longer and more connected sentences containing common discourse markers.

INTERMEDIATE HIGH (Sufficient comprehension to understand short informal conversations about all survival needs and limited social conventions)

Shows spontaneity in understanding; always attempts to impose an interpretation although speed and accuracy remain uneven or inconsistent. In face-to-face interactions, limited vocabulary still necessitates repetition or requests for contextual clues or explanations. Grammatical control is sufficient to interpret more complex constructions of coordination and subordination although relative tense/aspect markers and anaphoric phenomena may slow down comprehension. Good grasp of numbers, dates, arithmetic operations and calculations, monetary terms and currency values. Can recognize most common derived verb grades (Grades I, V, VI) though may have some difficulties interpreting them. Can get enough of the gist of short unfamiliar passages to write down key concepts or whole phrases. Comprehension sufficient to interpret informal situations, but may break down under stress or negative conditions.

ADVANCED (Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements)

In face-to-face encounters, seldom needs to ask for repetition or explanation although may still request paraphrase. In non-face-to-face situations (tapes, radio broadcasts, telephone conversations, overheard conversations) can get the main ideas and many details of the message. Can guess meanings of words or whole phrases from context. Shows greater ability to understand detail and elaboration in a broader range of personal as well as Hausa cultural topics (both traditional and Islamic), and in work-related areas. Beginning to understand the meanings and contexts of common proverbs and idiomatic expressions as well as some gestural language.

ADVANCED PLUS (Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conversations relating to school/work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence)

Shows great ability to follow normal tempo speech on a variety of topics including some abstract ones. Able to distinguish opinions and hypotheses from facts, and beginning to understand conjecture and innuendo. Able to

comprehend focussing, foregrounding devices and how they convey differences in meaning and intent as compared to neutral utterances. Comprehension under stressful conditions is sufficient to solve immediate problems or make quick decisions. In non-conversational situations (listening to broadcasts, public speeches, lectures, tapes) can take detailed notes, transcribe tapes with little difficulty except for unfamiliar lexical concepts.

SUPERIOR (Sufficient comprehension to understand essentials of all speech in standard dialect, including technical discussions within a special field)

Grammar and vocabulary broad enough to understand wide range of general and specialized topics. Is able to understand and adjust for differences between Standard Kano Hausa and other Hausa dialects. Is able to distinguish between neutral and more emotionally laden utterances and to interpret inferences. Can follow most informal colloquial conversation between native speakers. Can understand some formal situations (political speeches, dramatic presentations) and some technical discussions in fields of competence.

READING:

NOVICE

Can read for essential information related to immediate survival needs. Material consists of set phrases, standardized or schematized messages (e.g. road signs, maps, timetables) and is limited to the most common nouns, verbs, and adjectives in simple, not highly inflected constructions. Heavy reliance on a dictionary although frequently unable to locate a word listed by its root form.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Sufficient comprehension to interpret simple connected texts written in fully phonemic script dealing with basic survival and limited social needs. Able to understand mastered material (including inflected forms) and recombinations of mastered elements kept at the same level of meaning. Silent reading may require several repetitions for comprehension. Oral reading is characterized by uneven pace, and frequent failure to recognize certain affixal elements and punctuation

signs. Vocabulary areas include personal biographical information, clock time, dates, food, clothing, modes of transportation, and common attributes of size and color. Beginning to decode numbers as Hausa words. Perception of time relations depends mainly on adverbs of time rather than on tense/aspectual system. Able to look up words in dictionary by root forms. Comprehension strategies may still depend on word by word decoding.

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Sufficient comprehension to understand elementary texts in standard Hausa orthography written for communication, information, or recreational purposes. Can read a range of simply written materials, both prepared and authentic (personal letters, public health pamphlets, short narratives such as folktales, upper elementary childrens' primers, simple adult literacy materials). Understands more complex constructions and the use of cohesive elements such as discourse markers and connectors, relative markers, anaphoric uses of pronouns. Comprehension strategies increasingly based on more global integrative interpretations and an ability to anticipate ahead, with decreasing reliance on a dictionary except for completely new words or concepts.

ADVANCED PLUS

Sufficient comprehension to read a broad range of authentic materials printed in Nigeria and Niger, including differences in the orthographies of the two countries. Able to read non-technical prose such as cultural descriptions, news accounts and factual reportage, short fictional narratives (short stories, plays) and simple songs. Has a good grasp of the use and meaning of proverbs and idiomatic expressions. Can follow main ideas and separate out lesser or supporting themes. Beginning to differentiate facts from opinions, draw conclusions, and make simple generalizations. The major obstacle to overall comprehension is vocabulary rather than grammatical form.

SUPERIOR

Able to read wide range of materials, formal and informal, addressed to the general Hausa-speaking public. Is able to interpret hypotheses, supported opinions and conjectures; can draw inferences and read between the lines. Reading ability is not subject-matter dependent. Has broad enough general vocabulary that successful guessing resolves problems with complex or low-frequency

structures or highly idiomatic language. Misreading is rare; can almost always produce correct interpretations. Has had an introduction to Hausa written in Arabic script (*ajami*) and can decode this script at an elementary level.

WRITING:

NOVICE

Can produce correct orthographic symbols with little difficulty. Can copy and spell fairly accurately, though slowly, from dictation with many repetitions. May miss marking glottalized segments. Marking of tone and vowel length very rudimentary and unreliable. May make some incorrect word divisions, particularly with sequences of monosyllabic words. Production is limited to writing learned material or fixed expressions and taking very sketchy, incomplete notes averaging 2 to 3 word phrases.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Can spell in standard orthography with reasonable accuracy. Inaccuracies in phonemic writing mainly due to mistakes in tone or vowel length marking. In dictation, can write down at the clause level, with few mistakes in word segmentation. In note-taking, beginning to show greater ability to write down key words and phrases, main ideas, and more complete concepts. In less structured tasks, writing tends to consist of loosely organized sentences based on recombinations of learned structures dealing with very familiar topics. Can leave short messages expressing general information within areas of familiarity and write short memos (e.g. shopping lists, reminders to do something).

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Can handle semi-structured writing tasks such as writing informal letters using appropriate opening and closing formulae. Beginning to show spontaneity in writing short 2 to 3 paragraph original compositions or diary entries and can write paragraph-length summaries on pre-assigned tasks. Shows ability to use paraphrase or circumlocution to get the message across. Handwriting is completely legible to an understanding native speaker.

ADVANCED

Can express in one's own words a 1 to 2 page summary describing an article read or an event from personal experience, showing ability to express main ideas and supporting statements and using many appropriate discourse markers and anaphoric pronouns and specifiers. Can take notes with greater ease, speed, and accuracy. Expository writing shows greater complexity of structure in coordinate and subordinate clauses. Shows an increasing ability to express ideas more precisely. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary but not necessarily in both. Mistakes of grammar or style do not generally interfere with comprehension by an understanding native speaker. Uses a dictionary effectively to look up more precise words for expressing intended meanings.

SUPERIOR

Uses the written language effectively in most informal and some formal exchanges on practical and social topics, as well as some limited professional topics. While control of vocabulary and grammar is strong, style may still be foreign though it seldom interferes with comprehension by average native speaker. Has had a basic introduction to Hausa written in Arabic script (*ajami*) and can write it minimally at the simple word level.

SOCIOCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE:

NOVICE (Limited Interaction)

Knows some facts about the importance and spread of Hausa in West Africa and the Hausa-Fulani sociopolitical position in Nigeria and Niger. Is familiar with some male/female proper nouns, naming ceremony (*suunaa*), name avoidance; can pronounce names accurately. Knows about the importance of greetings (*gaisuwaa*) and politeness formulae and can use some under appropriate conditions. Knows some facts about a typical Hausa *gidaa* (arrangement of dwellings, family life, kinship system, and basic artifacts). Realizes the limitations of one's own sociocultural awareness but attempts to behave with consideration and an open mind.

INTERMEDIATE (Survival competence)

Is aware of the intertwining of traditional and Islamic customs in many aspects of everyday life and social conduct. Is able to describe types of foods, Hausa cuisine, ways of cooking, mealtime etiquette (ways of holding food, *santii*). Is aware of the social values attached to patterns and etiquette of gift-giving, receiving, and thanking in Hausa culture, and knows how to be gracious accordingly. Is familiar with the sociocultural settings of local markets, the role of bargaining in interpersonal transactions, and how to calculate in the local currency (including the old *fām/awèè* system). Is able to describe some broad aspects of traditional Hausa life regarding birth, death, marriage, the observance of fasting (*azūmii*) and the two major *Sallāa* religious festivals. Is able to describe some typical Hausa arts and crafts, Has been exposed to some of the moral teachings in folktales (*taatsuniyooyii*, *karin māganda*) and their sociocultural contexts. Is developing sensitivity to cultural differences, taboos, and the social meanings of Hausa body language (e.g. use of right hand, sounds such as *asāsakii*, facial expressions such as *gwaaloo*, ways of pointing).

ADVANCED (Limited social competence)

Handles routine social situations successfully with a native speaker accustomed to foreigners. Can discuss in informal settings many aspects of modern Hausa life and Western influences in such areas as urbanization, political systems, health care, and the question of national language and literacy in Nigeria and Niger. Has an awareness of the lexical heritage of Hausa and borrowings from other languages (Arabic, English, and Yoruba) and the sociolinguistic distribution of Hausa vis-à-vis English in everyday life at various socioeconomic levels. Beginning to have a broader appreciation of various forms of oral and written literature and their role in Hausa intellectual life. Is able to describe and compare differences between aspects of Hausa culture and cultural values (e.g. concept of *kunyāa*) and their American counterparts. Is relatively at ease adapting to cultural differences and does not offend the native speaker. At the same time, recognizes and understands West African cultural assumptions about Europeans (including Americans) traveling and working in West Africa. Knows some basic differences between Standard Kano Hausa and other regional dialects and the sociolinguistic implications of these. Is sensitive to the social differences in dealing with second language speakers of Hausa, and is aware of some features of non-standard Hausa dialects.

SUPERIOR (Working social and professional competence)

Can participate in almost all social situations in both rural and urban settings, as well as those within one's own vocation. Handles unfamiliar situations with ease and sensitivity, comprehends most nonverbal responses, laughs at some culture-related humor, and is at ease with idiomatic language. Can generally distinguish between formal and nonformal registers although productivity of formal registers may be more limited. While sociolinguistic inaccuracies may still exist, they seldom result in cultural misunderstanding.

PROVISIONAL GUIDELINES FOR PROFICIENCY IN LINGALA

Rozana Ma Neuman and Jean-Pierre Ngole

SPEAKING:

Within each speaking proficiency level, the numbers correspond to the following criteria:

- [1] phonology/intonation
- [2] morphology/syntax
- [3] vocabulary
- [4] fluency
- [5] communicative tasks/speech functions

NOVICE LOW (no real functional ability in the spoken language)

- [3] Able to produce some isolated words such as basic greetings or a few common nouns.

NOVICE MID (Able to operate only in very limited capacity in very predictable areas of need)

- [1] Can pronounce most segments, except prenasalized consonants (e.g. *mb, na*). Vowels remain strongly influenced by English.
- [2] Produces short formulaic learned utterances. Can use some very simple equational and existential sentences formed with verb *-zala*.
- [3] Vocabulary limited to courtesy expressions, animate nouns and independent pronouns. Knows and pronounces correctly a few traditional Lingala names.
- [4] Can speak at a slow and hesitant rate of speech and may need to repeat frequently in order to be understood. Speaks only when spoken to.
- [5] Can exchange a few basic greetings, identify oneself by name (*nkombo ya X ezali Y*) and profession. Uses a few polite terms of address.

NOVICE HIGH (Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances)

- [1] Can give correct tone patterns of some words and morphemes (e.g. *-dka* simple past). Beginning to pronounce vowels with full articulation values, including the distinction between *ɛ/e* and *ɔ/o*.
- [2] Can respond to simple information questions with *nani*, *nini*, *wapi* in present/immediate past *-i* tense. Can formulate yes/no questions with appropriate intonation patterns. Beginning to understand use of noun class concord markers of animate nouns of *mo/ba* and *e/bi* classes. Can use subject prefixes *a/ba* for animate nouns and the impersonal pronoun *-e* for all other nouns as used in non-standard varieties of Lingala. Can use noun-possessor and independent possessive (N *-zali ya* N/indep. pronoun) constructions and the demonstratives *-ye/oyo* and *wana*. Can use a few common verbs in affirmative sg/pl imperative.
- [3] Vocabulary deals mainly with animate nouns of *mo/ba* and *e/bi* classes and familiar things in the immediate classroom environment from other noun classes. Knows some verbs for describing everyday actions, adverbs of time and place, and the cardinal numbers from 1 to 50.
- [4] In basic interactions with learned structures, production still characterized by groping for words, irrelevant hand gestures, and raising the voice in an attempt to be understood. Can respond simply to simple questions in 2 to 3 word utterances.
- [5] Able to greet one or more people with a greater variety of formulae. Can identify oneself and others simply (by name, ethnic group, hometown, language spoken), and talk in limited ways about personal wants and needs, ask for simple who/what/where questions, and know how to address elders politely.

INTERMEDIATE LOW (Able to satisfy some basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements)

- [1] Vowel production starting to sound less foreign. Tonal distinctions are still underdifferentiated. Overall production may still be misunderstood even by native speaker used to foreigners.
- [2] Has greater control of subject prefixes for *mo/ba*, *mo/mi*, *e/bi* class nouns (animate and inanimate). Can produce correct word order of simple verbal

sentences, declarative or interrogative. Uses independent pronouns as object pronouns. Can form adjectival predicates with N -*zali* -adj or N -*zali* na N constructions. Tense forms include future -*ko*- and habitual -*àkà* as well as progressive present with -*zali* + *ko*-. Can form a few prepositional phrases such as *epai/o likolo/kati/...ya*. Can use *na* to conjoin nouns and *mpe*, *kasi*, and *to* to conjoin sentences. Can answer yes/no questions in both affirmative and negative.

- [3] Nominal vocabulary expanding to include parts of the body, kinship terms of reference and address, kinds of foods, modes of transportation. Expanding verbs include common motion and transitive verbs. Adjectives include those of size, color, and taste. Knows common adverbs of space and direction and some conjunctions.
- [4] Speaks less hesitantly and with fewer false starts. Attempts to respond with fuller, longer utterances although coping strategies may still include repetition, avoidance of certain words or structures, or fast nervous speech.
- [5] Able to give simple personal information about oneself regarding some likes/dislikes, can complain about one's health and express some simple emotional states (happiness, sadness). Can discuss simple day to day activities and talk about future plans. Able to help out strangers and give them directions to get to a place.

INTERMEDIATE MID (Able to satisfy survival needs and some limited social demands)

- [1] Overall production is generally intelligible to an understanding native speaker although inadequate distinction of tones may cause misunderstanding or require repetition.
- [2] Control of concordial prefixes expanding to include *ma* (liquid) class as well as *N/N*, *lo/N*, and *bo/ma* classes. Beginning to use object prefixes (as opposed to independent pronouns) for animate nouns, pronouns. Controls agreement in attribute adjectives and the numbers 1 to 5. Can formulate ordinal Numbers (including substitution of *liboso* for *màkò*). Beginning to control some uses of the subjunctive and can correctly distinguish uses of completive past -*akí* as distinct from distant simple past -*áká*. Controls forms of irregular monosyllabic verbs such as -*ya*, -*kenda*. Can use the comparative verb -*leka* appropriately. Beginning to use simple verbal extensions such as applicative -*el*, reflexive -*mi*, and reciprocal -*an* for adding objects to

- the predicate, as well as reversive *-ol*. Can use correct word order of verb-indirect object-direct object structures. Beginning to build discourse structure with appropriate markers such as *mpa*, *mpo na*, *lokola*.
- [3] Vocabulary includes terms for liquids and animals, loanwords taking *ma*-plural concord, modes of transportation, monetary terms, kinds of foods, and verbs describing ways to cook them. Can use cardinal numbers above 50.
 - [4] Beginning to show some spontaneous use of language. Can maintain simple face-to-face conversations although response time may still be halting at times. Often seeks clarification before responding.
 - [5] Knows mealtime etiquette and how to compliment, to request minor assistance or favors, to tell time and express dates, and to manipulate numbers for simple arithmetic operations. Able to be more precise in details regarding notions of time, space, and frequency. Able to greet according to greater variety of elements in the speech situation (topic, setting, listener).

INTERMEDIATE HIGH (Able to satisfy all survival needs and some routine social demands)

- [1] Production sufficiently good to be understood most of the time by the average native speaker, although occasionally miscommunicates.
- [2] Is able to form transitive from intransitive verbs by use of causative extension *-is* and combined extensions *-el + -is*. Can use double imperatives with *ko-*, the negative imperative, the hortative ("let's" with *tika*), and the subjunctive for polite commands. Can use compound question words (*mp na nini*, *ntango nini*). Can use a few auxiliary verbs such as *-linga*, *-sila*, *-koka*, *-koma* with main verb in infinitive. Can manipulate higher numbers and multiples thereof in more complex combinations. Can introduce subordinate clauses of purpose and reason with conjunctions such *mpamba te* and *mpo ya*. Exhibits greater use of prepositional phrases of type *o ntaka ya*, *o nsima ya*. Able to formulate instrumental/locative nouns in *e/bi* class which are derived from verbs. Can use subjunctive to express likes/desires, as well as necessity (using *tika*, *ebangi*).
- [3] Vocabulary increasing across all noun classes. General vocabulary sufficient to express most personal and social needs. Can appropriately use some interjections (*longonya*; *a*, *ngai e*; *ruke*).

- [4] Conversational fluency on familiar topics is markedly faster with fewer hesitation phenomena, although exhibits lack of awareness of certain Lingala social conventions of conversation. Coping strategies include attempts to paraphrase or modify the utterance to get the message across, thereby exhibiting some creative language use.
- [5] Can express basic opinions, likes, dislikes on a range of topics and subjects (clothes, leisure activities, sports, occupations). Could conduct a simple interview with a Lingala-speaking visitor to find out basic information regarding his/her background, reasons for being in the U.S., and future plans.

ADVANCED (Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements)

- [1] Can usually be understood by average native speaker and seldom miscommunicates.
- [2] Gaining more control of form and meaning of complex averbal extensions *-elan*, *-amel*, *-isan* and of *-ol* combined with other extensions. Controls form and use of all subject prefixes and most object infixes. In subordinate clauses, can control inversion of subject and verb, and use the impersonal verbal prefix *-e*. Understands the uses of *o* vs. *na* in adverbial and prepositional formations. Can manipulate various ways to express relative clauses (inversion, use of relative pronoun *oyo*, relative adverb (*ntango*, *esika*, *epai*, *lokola*, *ndenge*). Can answer negative questions appropriately without hesitation. Can express comparison, degrees of comparison with verbs *-kesena*, *-leka*, or use of *-lokola*. Can use *-soko* clauses with a range of tenses to express various degrees of conditionality, including contrary-to-fact statements. Knows the word order of different types of modifiers (e.g. *mikanda mya ngai oyo*, *nzete malamw motoba*). Knows how to formulate affirmative/negative indefinite pronouns (*moto moko*, *eloko te*) and reflexive pronouns with *moko*. Can use a variety of discourse markers (*nzokande*, *nga*, *mbele*, *nde*) to link ideas together in discourse and narrative.
- [3] Vocabulary includes more abstract nouns from various noun classes as well as those productively derived from verbs. Can express notions involving permission, refusal, prevention. Has good grasp of more idiomatic uses of common verbs. Expansion of general vocabulary relating to Swahili culture (traditional ceremonies, arts and crafts, popular folklore). Can use some

common proverbs appropriate to particular contexts. Knows and can use some Lingala word games and puzzles.

- [4] Overall fluency much smoother although sometimes gropes for specific or technical words. Discourse structure shows increased use of linking elements and conjunctions.
- [5] Able to discuss qualities, attributes of people, things and make detailed comparisons. Can handle situations involving permission, prohibition, necessity, doubt. Can satisfy routine social situations as guest or host and knows how to accept and refuse offers, invitations. Can express dissatisfaction, disapproval, can make complaints, and knows how to seek advice or assistance. Can recite an experience or retell a story (e.g. folktale, English or African) with appropriate discourse structure, narrative form, and stylistic accuracy. Can handle limited work requirements if there are no complicating factors.

ADVANCED PLUS (Able to satisfy most work requirements and shows some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence)

- [1] Production never interferes with understanding though it may still be obviously foreign, especially in stress, placement of tone, or vowel production.
- [2] Strong in basic grammar and vocabulary. Has good control of form, use, and meaning of tense, including the various past tenses. Can consistently use contracted forms of present progressive without confusion with future tense forms. Can produce direct vs. indirect speech with appropriate tenses. Correctly differentiates use and meaning of "modal" verbs used as main verb (*alingi Pɔaɔ*) or auxiliary verb + infinitive/subjunctive (*alingi kolia/alia*). Controls noun class concords generally except for irregular or rare plurals, or loanword plurals. Knows how to express more complex adjectival formations of the type *mboka ya kala*, *mobali wa mawa* and by the use of stative verbs such as *kolɛmba*, *kozoka*. Can manipulate a variety of ways for emphasis and focus, including uses with *maka*, *boye/bongo*.
- [3] Vocabulary increasing to include many productive noun derivatives from verbs (agentials, locatives, instrumentals, abstract nouns) and French loanwords which retain some original phonology (e.g. *kotɛɛfone*). Can refine shades of meaning by productive use of reduplicative processes. General vocabulary is good and can discuss topics of personal interests as well as special fields of competence. Idiomatic expressions include condolences,

congratulations, expressions of surprise and approval. Expressive language includes range of exclamations, interjections, and ideophones, accompanied by body gestures where appropriate.

- [4] Fluency and ease of speech generally remarkable but may be affected by stress or tension. Shows good ability to use circumlocutions as a coping strategy. Able to shift somewhat between Standard Lingala and pidginized or dialectal forms if the social context requires.
- [5] Able to talk about specialized or concrete topics with attention to details. Can describe, narrate, explain in present, past, and future, as well as hypothesize. Can distinguish fact from opinion. Can consistently communicate facts in an uncomplicated manner and handle familiar situations involving some complications. Expressive use of language sufficient to convey broad range of emotions, opinions, and social attitudes (pleasure, gratitude, hope, sorrow, doubt, disapproval, deference).

SUPERIOR (Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations in practical, social, and professional topics)

- [1] Pronunciation is good and always comprehensible to average native speaker; it may even approach native accuracy.
- [2] Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb a native speaker. Control is strong in high frequency areas, but may be less consistent in more complex or less common structures.
- [3] Rarely has to grope for a word except for technical concepts and specialized vocabulary. Has good knowledge of lexical concepts borrowed from French and Swahili. Controls broader use of proverbs and colloquialisms in context.
- [4] Can discuss particular areas of competence with ease and confidence in most informal and some formal situations. Use of circumlocutions is being replaced by greater ability to be precise.
- [5] Can support opinions, hypothesize, and use conjecture. Can compare and contrast with detail and precision and draw conclusions. In general, can communicate in a broad variety of situations and social levels and handle all but the most abstract topics.

LISTENING:

NOVICE LOW (No practical understanding of the spoken language)

May recognize Lingala (as opposed to another African language) by being able to pick out occasional isolated words such as forms of address, high frequency nouns, or politeness formulae.

NOVICE MID (Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need)

Can recognize all critical sound discriminations in Lingala except for *ɛ/e* and *ɔ/o* distinctions and prenasalized vs. non-nasalized consonants. Recognizes vocabulary relating to simple elementary needs and basic politeness expressions. Phrases recognized have mostly been memorized. Can understand utterances of 2 to 3 words long such as simple equational and existential sentences in present tense -*i* when the context is clear. Can respond to simple verbal commands by performing the action specified. Ability to understand is frequently characterized by long pauses or by requests for repetition or slower speech. Often confuses words that sound similar.

NOVICE HIGH (Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need)

Can follow slow tempo speech but attempts to understand are primarily in terms of morph by morph or word by word decoding strategies. Misunderstandings due to incorrect segmentation of morphemes or words. Can understand many simple imperatives, as well as simple affirmative/negative questions in -*i*, -*aki* and -*ko*- tenses relating to oneself, the weather, location of things in the immediate environment. Recognizes the numbers 1 to 50. Vocabulary is primarily limited to common and animate nouns of *mo/ba*, *e/bi* noun classes. Understands possessive constructions and other constructions with independent possessive pronouns. Beginning to get the gist of longer non-learned utterances in highly contextualized situations although may not always recall specific items and may often request repetition before responding.

INTERMEDIATE LOW (Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs, minimum courtesy and travel requirements)

Can recognize many minimal differences based on tone (*kokoma* vs. *kokóma*). Can identify many more subject and tense prefixes with fewer misinterpretations and recognize adjectival and adverbial constructions. Can understand most requests for information as well as multiple commands. In areas of personal needs and everyday activities, can understand non-memorized material sufficiently to maintain short conversational episodes. Comprehension areas comprise personal (including health and sickness) and biographical information, numbers, dates, notions of time, space and direction, meals, colors, and marketing scenes. Listening strategies decreasingly concerned with word by word decoding than with more global strategies. Can consistently understand common expressions, instructions, comments of approval/disapproval used by instructor to conduct and organize the class.

INTERMEDIATE MID (Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about survival needs and some limited social conventions)

Can understand most careful to normal speech spoken by native speakers accustomed to dealing with foreigners. Enlarged vocabulary permits understanding of topics beyond survival needs, including tastes and opinions in food, clothing, leisure activities. Expanding control of concord system permits greater ability to concentrate on nominal, verbal, adjectival roots for more direct comprehension of the message. Beginning to understand longer and more connected sentences marked by common discourse mark such as *mpɔ*, *lokola*.

INTERMEDIATE HIGH (Sufficient comprehension to understand short informal conversations about all survival needs and limited social conventions)

Shows spontaneity in understanding but speed and consistency is still uneven. In face-to-face interactions, limited vocabulary still necessitates repetition or requests for contextual clues or explanations. Grammatical control is sufficient to interpret more complex constructions of coordination and subordination although word order in relative clauses may slow down comprehension. Good grasp of numbers, dates, arithmetic operations and calculations, monetary terms and currency values. Can recognize most common and some complex

verbal extensions though may have some difficulties interpreting them. Can get the gist of short unfamiliar passages to write down key concepts or whole phrases. Comprehension sufficient to interpret informal situations, but may break down under stress or negative conditions.

ADVANCED (Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements)

In face-to-face encounters, seldom needs to ask for repetition or explanation although may still request paraphrase. In non-face-to-face situations (tapes, radio broadcasts, overheard conversations) can get the main ideas and many details of the message. Can guess meanings of words or whole phrases from context. Shows greater ability to understand detail and elaboration in a broader range of personal as well as Lingala cultural topics (both traditional and Westernized), and in work-related areas. Beginning to understand the use of common proverbs and idiomatic expressions.

ADVANCED PLUS (Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conversations relating to school/work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence)

Shows great ability to follow normal tempo speech on a variety of topics including some abstract ones. Able to distinguish opinions and hypotheses from facts, and beginning to understand conjecture and innuendo. Able to comprehend focussing, foregrounding devices and how they differ in meaning and intent from neutral utterances. Comprehension under stressful conditions is sufficient to solve immediate problems or make quick decisions. In non-conversational situations (listening to broadcasts, public speeches, tapes), can take detailed notes, transcribe tapes with little difficulty except for unfamiliar lexical concepts.

SUPERIOR (Sufficient comprehension to understand essentials of all speech in standard dialect, including technical discussions within a special field)

Grammar and vocabulary broad enough to understand wide range of general and specialized topics. Is able to distinguish between neutral and more

emotionally laden utterances and to make inferences. Can follow most informal colloquial conversation between native speakers. Can understand some formal situations (political speeches, dramatic presentations) and some technical discussions in fields of competence.

READING:

NOVICE

Can read for essential information related to immediate survival needs. Material consists of set phrases, standardized or schematized messages (e.g. road signs, maps, timetables) and are limited to the most common nouns, verbs, and adjectives in simple, not highly inflected constructions. Heavy reliance on a dictionary although frequently unable to locate a word listed by its root form.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Sufficient comprehension to interpret simple connected, printed material and some handwriting dealing with basic survival and limited social needs. Able to understand mastered material (including inflectional forms) and recombinations of mastered elements kept at the same level of meaning. Silent reading may require several repetitions for comprehension. Oral reading is characterized by pauses, uneven pace, and failure to recognize certain affixal elements and punctuation signs. Vocabulary areas include personal biographical information, clock time, dates, food, clothing, modes of transportation, and common attributes of size and color. Beginning to decode numbers as Lingala words. Perception of time relations depends mainly on adverbs of time rather than on tense/aspect system. Able to look up words in dictionary by root forms. Comprehension strategies still depend on word by word decoding.

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Sufficient comprehension to understand elementary texts for communication, information, or recreational purposes. Can read a range of simply written materials, both prepared and authentic (personal letters, public health pamphlets, simple narratives such as folktales, upper elementary childrens' primers, simple adult literacy materials). Understands more complex constructions and the use

of cohesive elements such as discourse markers and connectors, relative markers, anaphoric uses of pronouns. Comprehension strategies increasingly based on more global integrative interpretation and an ability to anticipate ahead.

ADVANCED PLUS

Sufficient comprehension to read broader range of authentic materials printed in Central Africa. Able to read non-technical prose such as cultural descriptions, news accounts and factual reportage, short fictional narratives (short stories, plays) and simple songs. Has a good grasp of the use and meaning of proverbs and idiomatic expressions. Can follow main ideas and separate out lesser or supporting themes. Beginning to differentiate facts from opinions, draw conclusions, and make simple generalizations.

SUPERIOR

Able to read wide range of materials, formal and informal, addressed to the general Lingala-speaking public. Is able to interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and conjectures, and can draw inferences and read between the lines. Reading ability is not subject-matter dependent. Has broad enough general vocabulary that successful guessing resolves problems with complex structures and low-frequency idioms. Misreading is rare and can almost always produce correct interpretations.

WRITING:

NOVICE

Can produce correct orthographic symbols with little difficulty. Can copy accurately and spell correctly though slowly from dictation with many repetitions. Makes some incorrect word divisions and may write *c* for *o* or *o* for *c*. Production is limited to writing learned material and taking very sketchy, incomplete class notes rarely exceeding 2 to 3 words.

INTERMEDIATE

In dictation, can write down at the clause level, with few mistakes in word segmentation. Can handle semi-structured writing tasks such as writing informal letters using appropriate opening and closing formulae. In note-taking, beginning to show greater ability to write down key words and phrases, main ideas, and

complete concepts. Can leave messages expressing rather precise information within areas of familiarity. Beginning to show spontaneity in writing short original compositions or diary entries and can write paragraph-length descriptions on familiar topics. Handwriting is completely legible to an understanding native speaker.

ADVANCED

Can express in one's own words a 1 to 2 page summary describing an article read or an event from personal experience, showing ability to express main ideas and supporting statements and using many appropriate discourse markers. Can take notes with greater ease, speed, and accuracy. Expository writing shows greater complexity of structure in coordinate and subordinate clauses, though weaknesses may include omitting concord markers, using incorrect word order, or incorrect spelling of differing forms of combined verbal extensions. Mistakes of grammar or style do not generally interfere with comprehension by an understanding native speaker.

SOCIOCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE:

NOVICE (Limited interaction)

Is resourceful in nonverbal communication but unreliable in interpretation of such cues. Knows some facts about the history and spread of Lingala in Central Africa and its sociopolitical dominance in Zaire and the Republic of Congo and areas surrounding the Zaire/Congo River. Is familiar with some male/female proper nouns and naming practices and can pronounce these names accurately. Knows about the importance of greetings, politeness formulae, terms of address, and can use some under appropriate conditions. Knows some facts about a typical Lingala household (family structure, kinship relationships, types of clothing, limited cultural artifacts). Realizes the limitations of one's own sociocultural awareness but attempts to behave with considerateness and an open mind.

INTERMEDIATE (Survival competence)

Is aware of both traditional values and Western influence in everyday life. Is able to describe types of foods, Central African cuisine, ways of cooking, meal-time etiquette. Is aware of the social values attached to patterns of gift-giving

and receiving, and of patterns of thanking in Lingala culture, and knows how to be gracious accordingly. Is familiar with the sociocultural settings of local markets, the role of bargaining in interpersonal transactions, and how to calculate in the local currency. Has some knowledge of the importance of river life along the Zaire/Congo in areas of transport, food production and fishing, economic trade, tourism. Is able to describe some broad aspects of traditional Lingala life regarding birth, death, marriage, religious festivals, arts and crafts. Has been exposed to moral teachings in some folktales and proverbs and their sociocultural contexts. Is developing sensitivity to cultural differences, taboos, and the social meanings of Lingala body language (e.g. use of right hand, ways of pointing, facial gestures).

ADVANCED (Limited social competence)

Handles routine social situations successfully with a native speaker accustomed to foreigners. Can discuss in informal settings many aspects of modern Lingala life, including urbanization, political systems, education, health care, and national language and literacy in Central Africa. Has some appreciation of popular Lingala music in contemporary African life. Has an awareness of the lexical heritage of Lingala and borrowings from other languages (French, Swahili, Portuguese,) and the sociolinguistic uses of Lingala vis-a-vis French in national life. Is able to describe and compare differences between aspects of Lingala culture and cultural values and their American counterparts. Is relatively at ease adapting to cultural differences and does not offend the native speaker. At the same, this adaptation takes into account Central African cultural assumptions about Europeans (including Americans) traveling and working in Central Africa. Knows some basic features which differentiates Standard Lingala from regional or pidginized dialects, as well as the sociolinguistic implications of these.

SUPERIOR (Working social and professional competence)

Can participate in almost all social situations in both rural and urban settings, as well as those within one's own vocation. Handles unfamiliar situations with ease and sensitivity, comprehends most nonverbal responses, laughs at some culture-related humor, and is at ease with idiomatic language. Can generally distinguish between formal and nonformal registers although productivity of formal registers may be more limited. While sociolinguistic inaccuracies may still exist, they do not result in cultural misunderstanding.

PROVISIONAL GUIDELINES FOR PROFICIENCY IN SWAHILI

Rozana Ma Newman and Sam Waweru

SPEAKING:

Within each speaking proficiency level, the numbers correspond to the following criteria:

- [1] phonology/intonation
- [2] morphology/syntax
- [3] vocabulary
- [4] fluency
- [5] communicative tasks/speech functions

NOVICE LOW (No real functional ability in the spoken language)

- [3] Able to produce some isolated words such as basic greetings or a few common nouns.

NOVICE MID (Able to operate only in very limited capacity in very predictable areas of need)

- [1] Can pronounce most segments, except for velar nasal, prenasalized consonants, syllabic nasals, and tap *r*. Accent remains strongly influenced by English.
- [2] Produces short formulaic learned utterances such as greetings. Can use equational sentences *ni/si* with common animate nouns in affirmative and negative and respond to "who/what is this/that" questions.
- [3] Vocabulary limited to courtesy expressions, nouns denoting people or things in immediate environment, and independent pronouns. Knows a few Swahili proper names and can pronounce these correctly.
- [4] Can speak at a slow and hesitant rate of speech and may need to repeat frequently in order to be understood. Speaks only when spoken to.

- [5] Can exchange a few basic greetings. Can introduce oneself or others by name (*jina la__ X*) or profession. Uses a few polite forms of address.

NOVICE HIGH (Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances)

- [1] Can articulate most vowel sequences though still underdifferentiates stressed from unstressed vowels. Is beginning to use some correct intonation patterns.
- [2] Can respond to simple information questions with *nani*, *nini*, *gani* with grammatically incomplete but sociolinguistically acceptable short answers. Can formulate and answer simple yes/no questions in present affirmative. Can use existential sentences (*kuna/hakuna*) in affirmative and negative. Uses correct word order in possessive constructions although frequent errors in concord occur. Can use a few common verbs in affirmative singular imperative. Can formulate locative nouns with the suffix *-ni*.
- [3] Vocabulary deals mainly with animate nouns of *m/wa* class as well as familiar items in the immediate classroom environment from other noun classes. Knows some verbs describing everyday activities, a few unitary adverbs of place, and numbers from 1-20.
- [4] Able to initiate some basic interactions using learned structures, though production still characterized by groping for words, irrelevant hand gestures, and raising the voice in an attempt to be understood. Can respond simply in 2 to 3 word utterances.
- [5] Able to greet one or more people at appropriate times of day, identify oneself more fully by occupation, language spoken, nationality. Can talk in limited ways about the weather. Can ask and answer simple information questions. Can command one or more people to carry out familiar everyday actions. Can ask someone to repeat what they said or speak more slowly.

INTERMEDIATE LOW (Able to satisfy some basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements)

- [1] Beginning to produce some Swahili patterns of stress and intonation, though can still be misunderstood even by native speakers used to foreigners. Can produce velar nasal and prenasalized consonants with little difficulty.

- [2] Can use short verbal sentences with correct prefixal markers for *m/wa* and *ki/vi* classes in present and past tenses with appropriate time adverbs. Can express possession and noun-adjective constructions though with frequent errors of agreement. Can control animate agreement. Starting to produce correct word order and form of verbal affixes except for object infixes. Uses some proximate and yonder demonstratives. Controls negative tenses *ha...i*, *ha...ku*, *ha...ta* tenses and the negative imperative. Can use 'be in a place' *-ko* construction in past and present.
- [3] Vocabulary expanding to include body-part nouns, kinship terms of reference and address, more common verbs, adjectives of quality, size, color, taste, and adverbs of time and direction, as well as some conjunctions (*na*, *kwa*, *lakini*). Can count to 100. Greetings include forms appropriate to elders and superiors. Can use a number of expressive words such as *kweli*, *mbona* in appropriate contexts.
- [4] Can speak less hesitantly with fewer false starts. Attempts to respond with fuller, longer utterances, although coping strategies may still include repetition, avoidance of certain words or structures, or fast nervous speech.
- [5] Able to give simple biographical and personal information about oneself (family structure, academic studies, state of health, feelings of hunger and thirst). Can name and describe physical attributes of people or things in familiar settings. Can carry out simple market transactions using appropriate opening and closing routines. Can describe simple events in past and present. Can give basic commands and instruct someone to carry out everyday activities.

INTERMEDIATE MID (Able to satisfy survival needs and some limited social demands)

- [1] Overall production is generally intelligible to an understanding native speaker though repetition may still be required to be understood.
- [2] Expanding control of concord system includes *n/n*, *ji/ma*, and *m/mi* classes, including object prefixes and adjective and numeral agreement for the numbers 1-5, 8, and multiples thereof. Can formulate ordinal numbers including substitution of *kwanza* instead of *moja*. Control of tenses includes affirmative tenses *me*, *ki*, *hu* and negative tenses *ha...ja* and *sipo*. Can use past and future forms of 'have' and *ni* constructions requiring *-kuwa*. Controls forms of irregular monosyllabic verbs and the use/non-use of *-ku*.

Beginning to use subjunctive tense in limited environments. Can formulate questions with *ngapi*, *-pi*, and compounds with *kwa nini* and *gani*. Beginning to build discourse structure with markers such as *lazima*, *kama*, *kwa sababu*.

- [3] Expanding vocabulary includes days of the week, months, seasons of the year, adverbs of manner, prepositional phrases formed with *chin/jux/nyuma/...ya*, as well as some verbs of comparison and becoming. Uses more culturally related vocabulary related to local flora and fauna, foods and ways of cooking them.
- [4] Beginning to show some spontaneous use of language. Can maintain simple face-to-face conversations although response time may still be halting at times. Often seeks clarification before responding.
- [5] Is able to make negative statements, including denial and contradiction, tell Swahili clock time, express dates, give directions, and describe locations. Can manipulate numbers and perform simple arithmetic operations. Able to be more precise in details regarding notions of time, space, and frequency, as well as compare people and things by their attributes. Able to greet appropriately according to greater variety of elements in the speech situation (topic, setting, listener).

INTERMEDIATE HIGH (Able to satisfy all survival needs and some routine social demands)

- [1] Production sufficiently good to be understood most of the time by the average native speaker although occasionally miscommunicates.
- [2] Beginning to control some verbal extensions such as applicative *e/i*, reflexive *ji*, causative *ish/iz*, reciprocal *an*, and some relative clauses with *amba-*. Order of verbal affixes is generally accurate and seldom makes mistakes of form such as consonant modifications (e.g. *k > ch*). Great improvement in accuracy of subject prefix concords for most noun classes except *u/ny* and *u* classes. Greater ability to manipulate higher numbers and multiples thereof in more complex combinations. Can correctly use progressive and compound tenses with *-kuwa* and *-kwisha*. Good use of conjunctions (*au*, formations with *kwa*) to introduce subordinate clauses. Beginning to use intransitive stative verbs productively.
- [3] Nominal vocabulary increasing across all noun classes. General vocabulary sufficient to express personal needs, activities, travel requirements related to

settings in Tanzania or Kenya (names of towns, geographical features, modes of transportation, village life). Can use a greater range of interjections (*wala*, *pole*, *haya*) and idiomatic phrases (e.g. *chungu nzima*) appropriately.

- [4] Conversational fluency on familiar topics is markedly faster with fewer hesitation phenomena, although exhibits lack of awareness of certain Swahili social conventions of conversation. Coping strategies include attempts to paraphrase or modify the utterance to get the message across, exhibiting greater creative use of language.
- [5] Can express basic opinions, likes, dislikes on a range of topics and subjects (food, leisure activities, occupations, clothes, entertainment). Can describe future events and talk about plans, expectations. Could conduct a simple interview with a Swahili-speaking visitor to find out basic information regarding his/her background, reasons for being in the U.S., and future plans.

ADVANCED (Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements)

- [1] Can usually be understood by the average native speaker and seldom miscommunicates. Production of vowels, including long vowels, is more accurate and less influenced by English vowel and stress systems.
- [2] Able to distinguish passive from stative constructions and can use reversionary /u verbs in the passive form. Beginning to use reduplicatives (*tembea-tembea*) more productively. Expanded control of verb tenses includes *ka* tense and some uses of the subjunctive. Controls form and use of all subject prefixes and most object infixes. Can use some verbs of comparison to express degrees of comparison, superiority, inferiority. Beginning to productively use relative markers *-o*, *-vyo*, the locative classes *-po*, *-ko*, and *-mo*. Making use of nominalizations, compounds and a greater variety and complexity of modifiers, including use of *-enye* construction. Controls form and some uses of demonstratives. Greater use of subordinate clauses with the subjunctive to express intent and purpose.
- [3] Vocabulary includes abstract nouns and nouns derived from verbs such as agentives and instrumentals. Conjunctions include *ili*, *mpaka*, *afadhali*, *baada ya*, *ingawa*, *ijapo* and connectives such as *basi*, *hata*. Verbs include those of refusing, preventing, prohibiting, and the idiomatic collocations formed with *-piga*. Expansion of general vocabulary relating to Swahili culture

(traditional ceremonies, arts and crafts, popular folklore). Knows and uses some common proverbs in appropriate contexts. Knows and can use some Swahili word games and puzzles.

- [4] Overall fluency much smoother though sometimes gropes for specific or technical words. Discourse structure shows increased use of linking elements and discourse markers.
- [5] Can handle many situations involving permission, prohibition, necessity, advice. Is able to ask questions in a variety of ways and respond appropriately to negative questions. Can satisfy routine social situations as guest or host, know how to accept/refuse offers and invitations, and make apologies. Can handle household problems (hiring, firing, repairs, basic emergencies). Can express approval/disapproval, make complaints, be precise in requesting assistance, favors. Knows the etiquette of conversational turn-taking (e.g. use of *naam*, *kweli*?, *kwan*), how to interrupt, change the subject, terminate the episode. Can recite an experience, retell a story (e.g. folktale, English or African) with appropriate discourse structure and narrative form. Can handle limited work requirements if there are no complicating factors.

ADVANCED PLUS (Able to satisfy most work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence)

- [1] Production seldom interferes with understanding though it may still be obviously foreign, especially in stress and intonation.
- [2] Strong in basic grammar and vocabulary. Form and use of tenses, affirmative and negative, are usually correct, including uses of infinitive *ku-*, the subjunctive, and the conditional tenses *nge*, *ngali*. Has good grasp of noun compounding and reduplication processes. Controls forms and use of all demonstratives, possessive pronouns, relative markers, infix object markers, and *-ote* forms. Uses various means to express emphasis and focus. Can creatively combine verbal extensions and understand their role in modifying meaning.
- [3] General vocabulary is sufficiently broad enough to discuss topics of personal interests as well as special fields of competence. Idiomatic expressions include condolences, congratulations, expressions of surprise and approval. Repertoire of responses includes range of interjections, exclamations, and ideophones, accompanied by body gestures where appropriate. Controls a

wide range of loanwords and loan concepts from English and Arabic, with some understanding of their phonological and lexical adaptation into contemporary Swahili.

- [4] Fluency and ease of speech generally remarkable but may be affected by stress or tension. Shows good ability to use circumlocutions as coping strategies. Able to shift somewhat between Standard Swahili and pidginized or dialectal forms if the social context requires.
- [5] Able to talk about specialized or concrete topics some detailed accuracy. Can describe, narrate, explain in present, past, and future, as well as hypothesize (including contrary-to-fact statements). Can consistently communicate facts in an uncomplicated manner and handle familiar situations involving some complications. Can distinguish fact from opinion. Expressive language is sufficient to express broad range of emotions (pleasure, gratitude, hope, sorrow, disapproval, doubt, deference).

SUPERIOR (Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations in practical, social, and professional topics).

- [1] Pronunciation is good and may even approach native accuracy.
- [2] Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb a native speaker. Control is strong in high frequency areas, but may be less consistent in more complex or less common structures.
- [3] Rarely has to grope for a word except for technical concepts or specialized vocabulary. Controls broader use of proverbs and colloquialisms in context.
- [4] Can discuss particular areas of competence with ease and confidence in most informal and some formal situations. Use of circumlocutions is being replaced by greater ability to be precise.
- [5] Can support opinions, hypothesize, and use conjecture. Can compare and contrast with detail and precision, and draw conclusions. In general, can communicate in a broad variety of situations and social levels and handle all but the most abstract topics.

LISTENING:

NOVICE LOW (No practical understanding of the spoken language)

May recognize Swahili (as opposed to another African language) by being able to pick out occasional isolated words such as forms of address, high frequency nouns, or politeness formulae.

NOVICE MID (Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need)

Can recognize all critical sound discriminations in Swahili except for *i/e* and *o/u* distinctions. Recognizes vocabulary relating to simple elementary needs and basic politeness expressions. Phrases recognized have mostly been memorized. Can understand utterances of 2-3 words long only such as simple equational and existential sentences in present tense or sentences with personal pronouns, when the context is clear. Can respond to simple verbal commands by performing the action specified. Ability to understand is frequently characterized by long pauses or by requests for repetition or slower speech. Often confuses words that sound similar.

NOVICE HIGH (Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need)

Can follow slow tempo speech; attempts to understand are primarily in terms of morph by morph or word by word decoding strategies. Misunderstandings due to incorrect segmentation of morphemes or words. Can understand simple affirmative and negative questions in present or past tenses about oneself, the weather, location of things in the immediate environment, and recognizes the numbers above 20. Vocabulary is primarily limited to common and animate nouns of *m/wa*, *ki/vi* noun classes. Beginning to get the gist of longer non-learned utterances in highly contextualized situations although may not always recall specific items and may often request repetition before responding.

INTERMEDIATE LOW (Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs, minimum courtesy and travel requirements)

Can identify many more subject and tense prefixes with fewer misinterpretations and recognize noun-possessor and noun-adjective constructions. Can

understand negative statements in the present, past, and future, as well as negative commands. Can understand most requests for information and multiple commands. In areas of personal needs and everyday activities, can understand non-memorized material sufficiently to maintain short conversational episodes. Comprehension areas include personal (including health and sickness) and biographical information, Swahili clock time, dates, modes of transportation, directions and geographical locations, meals, clothing, colors, and marketing scenes. Listening strategies decreasingly concerned with word by word decoding than with more global strategies. Can consistently understand common expressions, instructions, comments of approval/disapproval used by instructor to conduct and organize the class.

INTERMEDIATE MID (Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about survival needs and some limited social conventions)

Can understand most careful to normal speech spoken by native speakers accustomed to dealing with foreigners. Enlarged vocabulary permits understanding of topics beyond survival needs, including tastes in food, clothing, leisure activities. Expanding control of concord system permits greater ability to concentrate on nominal, verbal, adjectival roots for more direct comprehension of the message. Beginning to understand longer and more connected sentences marked by common discourse markers such as *kama*, *baada ya*, *lazima*, etc.

INTERMEDIATE HIGH (Sufficient comprehension to understand short informal conversations about all survival needs and limited social conventions)

Shows spontaneity in understanding but speed and consistency is still uneven. In face-to-face interactions, limited vocabulary still necessitates repetition or requests for contextual clues or explanations. Grammatical control is sufficient to interpret more complex constructions of coordination and subordination although word order in relative clauses may slow down comprehension. Good grasp of numbers, dates, arithmetic operations and calculations, monetary terms and currency values. Can recognize most common and some complex verbal extensions though may have some difficulties interpreting them. Can get the gist of short unfamiliar passages to write down key concepts or whole phrases. Comprehension sufficient to interpret informal situations, but may break down under stress or negative conditions.

ADVANCED (Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements)

In face-to-face encounters, seldom needs to ask for repetition or explanation although may still request paraphrase. In non-face-to-face situations (tapes, radio broadcasts, telephone conversations, overheard conversations) can get main ideas and many details of the message. Can guess meanings of words or phrases from context. Shows great ability to understand detail and elaboration in a broader range of personal as well as Swahili cultural topics, and in work-related areas. Beginning to understand the use of common proverbs and idiomatic expressions, as well as some gestural language.

ADVANCED PLUS (Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conversations relating to school/work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence)

Shows greater ability to follow normal tempo speech on a variety of topics including some abstract ones. Able to distinguish opinions and hypotheses from facts, and beginning to understand conjecture and innuendo. Able to comprehend focussing, foregrounding devices and how they differ in meaning and intent from neutral utterances. Comprehension under stressful conditions is sufficient to solve immediate problems or make quick decisions. In non-conversational situations, (listening to broadcasts, public speeches, lectures, tapes), can take detailed notes, transcribe tapes with little difficulty except for unfamiliar lexical concepts.

SUPERIOR (Sufficient comprehension to understand essentials of all speech in standard dialect, including technical discussions within a special field)

Grammar and vocabulary broad enough to understand wide range of general and specialized topics. Is able to understand and adjust for differences between Standard Swahili and other regional or pidginized dialects. Is able to distinguish between neutral and more emotionally laden utterances and to make inferences. Can follow most informal colloquial conversation between native speakers. Can understand some formal situations (political speeches, dramatic presentations) and some technical discussions in fields of competence.

READING:

NOVICE

Can read for essential information related to immediate survival needs. Material consists of set phrases, standardized or schematized messages (e.g. road signs, maps, timetables) and are limited to the most common nouns, verbs, and adjectives in simple, not highly inflected constructions. Heavy reliance on a dictionary although frequently unable to locate a word listed by its root form.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Sufficient comprehension to interpret simple connected, printed materials and some handwriting dealing with basic survival and limited social needs. Able to understand mastered material (including inflectional forms) and recombinations of mastered elements kept at the same level of meaning. Silent reading may require several repetitions for comprehension. Oral reading is characterized by pauses, uneven pace, and failure to recognize certain affixal elements and punctuation signs. Vocabulary areas include personal biographical information, clock time, dates, food, clothing, modes of transportation, and common attributes of size and color. Beginning to decode numbers as Swahili words. Perception of time relations depends mainly on adverbs of time rather than on tense/aspect system. Able to look up words in dictionary by root forms. Comprehension strategies still depend on word by word decoding.

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Sufficient comprehension to understand elementary texts for communication, information, or recreational purposes. Can read a range of simply written materials, both prepared and authentic (personal letters, public health pamphlets, short narratives such as folktales, upper elementary childrens' primers, simple adult literacy materials). Understands more complex constructions and the use of cohesive elements such as discourse markers and connectors, relative markers, anaphoric uses of pronouns. Comprehension strategies increasingly based on more global integrative interpretation and an ability to anticipate ahead with decreasing reliance on a dictionary except for completely new words or concepts.

ADVANCED PLUS

Sufficient comprehension to read broader range of authentic materials printed in East Africa. Able to read non-technical prose such as cultural descriptions, news accounts and factual reportage, short fictional narratives (short stories, plays) and simple songs. Has a good grasp of the use and meaning of proverbs and idiomatic expressions. Can follow main ideas and separate out lesser or supporting themes. Beginning to differentiate facts from opinions, draw conclusions, and make simple generalizations. The major obstacle to overall comprehension is vocabulary rather than structural form.

SUPERIOR

Able to read wider range of materials addressed to the general Swahili-speaking public. Is able to interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and conjectures, and can draw inferences and read between the lines. Reading ability is not subject-matter dependent. Has broad enough general vocabulary that successful guessing resolves problems with complex structures and low-frequency idioms. Misreading is rare; can almost always produce correct interpretations. Has had an introduction to Swahili written in Arabic (*ajami*) script and can decode this script at an elementary level.

WRITING:

NOVICE

Can produce correct orthographic symbols with little difficulty. Can copy accurately and spell phonemically though slowly from dictation with many repetitions. May make some incorrect word divisions. Production is limited to writing learned material or fixed expressions and taking very sketchy, incomplete notes averaging 2 to 3 word phrases.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Can spell in standard orthography with reasonable accuracy. In dictation, can write down at the clause level, with few mistakes in word segmentation. In note-taking, beginning to show greater ability to write down key words and phrases, main ideas, and more complete concepts. Can leave short messages expressing general information within areas of familiarity and write short memos (e.g. shopping lists, reminders to do something).

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Can handle semi-structured writing tasks such as informal letters using appropriate opening and closing formulae. In less structured tasks, writing tends to consist of loosely organized sentences based on recombinations of learned structures dealing with very familiar topics. Beginning to show spontaneity in writing short 2 to 3 paragraph original compositions or diary entries and can write paragraph-length summaries on pre-assigned tasks. Shows ability to use paraphrase or circumlocution to get the message across. Handwriting is completely legible to an understanding native speaker.

ADVANCED

Can express in one's own words a 1 to 2 page summary describing an article read or an event from personal experience, showing ability to express main ideas and supporting statements and using many appropriate discourse markers and connectors. Can take notes with greater ease, speed, and accuracy. Expository writing shows greater complexity of structure in coordinate and subordinate clauses. Weaknesses may still include occasional omission of anaphoric markers, misuse of relative markers, or inadequate control of concord markers. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary but not necessarily in both. Shows an increasing ability to express ideas more precisely. Mistakes of grammar or style do not generally interfere with comprehension by an understanding native speaker.

SUPERIOR

Uses the written language effectively in most informal and some formal exchanges on practical and social topics, as well as some limited professional topics. While control of vocabulary and grammar is good, style may still be foreign but does not interfere with comprehension by average native speaker. Uses dictionary effectively to look up more precise words for expressing intended meanings. Has had a basic introduction to Swahili written in Arabic script and can write it minimally at the simple word level.

SOCIOCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE:

NOVICE (Limited interaction)

Is resourceful in nonverbal communication but unreliable in interpretation of such cues. Knows some facts about the importance and spread of Swahili in East Africa and its sociopolitical dominance in Kenya, Tanzania. Is familiar with some male/female proper nouns and naming practices and can pronounce these names accurately. Knows about the importance of greetings (*maamkia*) and politeness formulae and can use some under appropriate conditions. Knows some basic terms to describe a typical household (family structure, kinship terms, limited cultural artifacts). Realizes the limitations of one's own sociocultural awareness but attempts to behave with considerateness and an open mind.

INTERMEDIATE (Survival competence)

Can deal with familiar survival situations and interact with a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners. Is aware of the intertwining of traditional and Islamic concepts in many aspects of everyday life and social conduct. Is able to describe types of foods, East African cuisine, ways of cooking, mealtime etiquette. Is aware of the social values in patterns of gift-giving, receiving, and thanking in Swahili culture and reacts according. Is familiar with the sociocultural settings of local markets, the role of bargaining in interpersonal transactions, and how to calculate in the local currency. Is able to describe some broad aspects of traditional Swahili life regarding birth, death, marriage, religious festivals, arts and crafts. Has been exposed to some of the moral teachings in folktales and proverbs and their sociocultural contexts. Is developing sensitivity to cultural differences, taboos, and the social meanings of Swahili body language (e.g. use of right hand, ways of pointing, facial expressions).

ADVANCED (Limited social competence)

Can usually handles routine social situations successfully with a native speaker accustomed to foreigners. Can discuss in informal settings many aspects of modern Swahili life and Western influences in such areas as urbanization, political systems, health care, and the question of national language and literacy in East Africa. Has an awareness of the lexical heritage of Swahili and borrowings from other languages (Arabic, Portuguese, English) and the sociolinguistic uses of Swahili vis-a-vis English in national life. Beginning to have an appreciation of various forms of oral and written Swahili literature. Is able to describe and compare differences between aspects of Swahili culture and cultural values (e.g.

concept of *heshima*) and their American counterparts. Is relatively at ease adapting to cultural differences and does not offend the native speaker. At the same, this adaptation takes into account East African cultural assumptions about Europeans (including Americans) traveling and working in East Africa. Knows some basic differences between Standard Swahili and more pidginized dialects and the sociolinguistic implications of these.

SUPERIOR (Working social and professional competence)

Can participate in almost all social situations and those within one's own vocation. Handles unfamiliar situations with ease and sensitivity, comprehends most nonverbal responses, laughs at some culture-related humor, and is at ease with idiomatic language. Can generally distinguish between formal and nonformal registers although productivity of formal registers may be more limited. While sociolinguistic inaccuracies may still exist, they do not result in cultural misunderstanding.